

## Gulf of Aqaba tremor shakes southern Israel

TEL AVIV (AP) — An earthquake with a magnitude of 5.1 shook southern Israel Tuesday, but there were no reports of damage or injury. The tremor came a month after a stronger quake left eight dead in Jordan, Egypt and Israel. The Institute for Petroleum Research and Geophysics said Tuesday's quake was centred in the Gulf of Aqaba, about 100 kilometres south of the Red Sea resort of Eilat. Residents of the Negev desert town of Beer Sheva said the quake struck at 8:22 a.m. (0622 GMT) and shook walls and windows.

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عن المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية، الرائي

## Kuwait agrees in principle to renew ties with Jordan

KUWAIT CITY (AFP) — The Kuwaiti government has "agreed in principle" to restore relations with Jordan, sources said since Iraq's invasion of the oil-rich emirate in 1990, newspapers citing the country's foreign minister said Tuesday. "There is an accord within the cabinet on the principle of restoring relations with Jordan" which have remained frozen since Amman was accused of backing Baghdad, Sheikh Sabah Al Ahmad Al Sabah, the foreign minister, said. He added there were differences over the "most appropriate manner" in which to resume ties. On December 18 Sheikh Jaber presented his resignation following a dispute with crown prince and Prime Minister Sheikh Saad Al Abdallah Al Sabah, who accused him of announcing that relations would soon be restored. But he withdrew his resignation the same day after the intervention of the emir, Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmad Al Sabah. Jordan has repeatedly called on Gulf Arab states to restore ties, and has made progress in healing the rift with Saudi Arabia, which in August named its first ambassador to Amman in five years, after a visit to Riyadh by Foreign Minister Abdul Karim, Kabariti.

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## King, Mubarak hold talks in Aqaba Jordan, Egypt committed to safeguarding unity of Iraq 'It is up to Iraqis to decide future'

By Ayman Al Safadi  
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AQABA — His Majesty King Hussein and Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak on Tuesday reaffirmed their commitment to safeguarding the territorial integrity of Iraq and to working towards ending the suffering of the Iraqi people.

Talking to journalists after about four hours of talks they held during a short visit to Aqaba, the two leaders also said that it was up to the Iraqi people to determine their future and choose the proper solution to their internal problems.

"We have the same feeling

towards the suffering of (the Iraqi people). We are all committed to the unity of Iraq," said King Hussein who stressed that the Iraqi people should have the ability to determine their own future.

President Mubarak told reporters that "there is no difference in our ideas and approaches concerning Iraq... we both support the territorial integrity of Iraq and we both want to work towards ending the suffering of the Iraqi people."

"There is no difference between me and His Majesty King Hussein in this regard," Mr. Mubarak said after the talks with King Hussein which were attended by His Royal Highness Crown

Prince Hassan, Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker, Foreign Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti and his Egyptian counterpart Amr Musa as well as other Jordanian and Egyptian officials.

King Hussein reiterated that the idea of federation among the three components of the Iraqi society was brought forward only as one of the options that the Iraqis can consider in the future, adding that "it is up to the Iraqis to decide on this."

"Our duty is to help the Iraqis save their country," and to call on representatives of the Iraqi society to cooperate in that endeavour and to assure the Iraqis that "a bloodbath in Iraq will not

happen," the King said in a meeting that he and Mr. Mubarak held with chief editors of Jordanian and Egyptian newspapers.

Warning that division of Iraq would entail harm for all countries of the region the King said: "We are worried about the situation in Iraq. Division occurred when its leadership decided to carry out a referendum" in which segments of the Iraqi society were excluded.

In addition to Iraq, King Hussein and President Mubarak said they also discussed the Syrian track of the peace process, inter-Arab relations and bilateral ties.

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His Majesty King Hussein and Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak talk to journalists after holding talks at the Royal Palace in Aqaba (photo by Boghos)

## Syria, Israel resume talks in U.S. today

TEL AVIV (R) — Prime Minister Shimon Peres said he expected results to emerge from the first talks with Syria in six months beginning in the U.S. today.

"We do have expectations of the negotiations this time from the Syrians, Mr. Peres told the Japanese television network NHK, according to his spokeswoman Aliza Goren on Tuesday.

"Perhaps not the substance, but the atmosphere from Damascus is positive," she quoted him as saying.

Israel has been surprised by the upbeat tone of its arch-foe since the more dovish Peres succeeded slain Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin in November. Negotiators will meet for three days in rural Maryland near Washington.

"We hope that this round will be better than the previous ones. There is a new atmosphere and we have big hopes. We look forward to progress," a senior Syrian official said on Tuesday.

He said Syria was ready to discuss all points with an open mind in the meetings starting near Washington on Wednesday.

"Syria is ready to discuss any ideas from the Israelis if these do not harm our sovereignty, dignity and independence and if these ideas will lead to full withdrawal from our occupied lands," he said.

Israel and Syria have negotiated off and on since 1991 but are deadlocked over

the fate of the Golan Heights captured by Israel in the 1967 Middle East war, security arrangements and future ties.

The talks broke off in June. Syrian officials said Damascus had strongly rejected an Israeli demand to set up an early warning ground station in the Golan.

Israel wants Syria to commit to diplomatic relations, open borders and trade before the Jewish state will say how far it is willing to pull back. Syria insists on a full withdrawal.

Both sides have demonstrated a resolve to make headway since Mr. Rabin's assassination on Nov. 4 by Yigal Amir, a right-wing Jew opposed to handing land to Arabs.

Mr. Peres' coalition defeated two no-confidence motions in Israel's parliament on Monday against returning the Golan Heights for peace with Syria. The vote was 56-48.

But opinion polls show more than half of all Israelis oppose giving up the Golan, many of them viewing the Heights as a strategic necessity and doubting Syria's sincerity about wanting peace.

Israeli leaders had welcomed Syrian President Hafez Al Assad's remarks made in Cairo on Saturday in which he said the new Israeli premier wanted peace with more openness. Syria also welcomed Mr. Peres' hints about withdrawal from the Golan. The Syrian delegation consisted of Walid Al Mualem, Syria's ambassador

to Washington and Michael Wahbi, director of foreign minister Farouq Al Sharaa's office.

Mowafak Al Alaf, Syria's chief peace negotiator, has left the team to become an assistant secretary-general of the Cairo-based Arab League.

Meanwhile Israel's minister of agriculture said on Tuesday that the Jewish state could make no concessions on water it gets from the Golan Heights.

Minister Yaacov Tsur made the comment during a visit to northern Israel just a day ahead of the resumption of peace talks.

"The water from the Golan Heights... about 200 to 300 million cubic, is a critical, vital, I'd even say fateful like nothing else issue for the state of Israel's future," Mr. Tsur said.

"I don't know of any replacement for this water and therefore the state of Israel has to take a very, very firm stand that no unilateral change occurs — because we are not dealing here with any issue resulting from the six day (1967) war," he told Israel's army radio.

The strategic plateau overlooking northern Israel is a key water-gathering region in the parched Middle East. It is the site of the headwaters of the Jordan River.

Israel says tributaries flowing from the Golan into the Sea of Galilee, Israel's largest reservoir, provide 30 per cent of its needs.

## Israel withdraws from around Hebron

DAHARIYA, West Bank (AP) — Hundreds of Palestinian troops took up positions in villages around Hebron early Tuesday as the PLO took over local policing duties in one of the most restive areas of the West Bank.

Israel formally turned over the limited control in the cluster of villages with a brief handshake between Israel's Hebron army commander, Col. Gadi Shani, and Palestinian police commander Brig. Gen. Abdul Zaaydi.

After the handover outside the former Israeli military headquarters in the village of Dahariya, the Israeli troops left in six army jeeps.

Hanging out of bus windows waving Kalashnikov rifles, Palestinian flags and pictures of PLO Chief Yasser Arafat the Palestinian police then drove into the former Israeli headquarters and raised their flag.

Hundreds of villagers placed olive branches on the arriving buses and the departing Israeli jeeps, dancing and singing nationalist songs.

Inside the headquarters, Mohammad Hassan, 35, stood outside a small room used by the Israelis as an interrogation cell.

Mr. Hassan was questioned in the room for 11 days in 1988. He also spent 18 months in Israeli jail over the years 1988-1990 for membership in the then outlawed PLO Fatah faction.

"I never dreamed that one day Palestinians would be in control," Mr. Hassan said. "Now we can feel safe and secure and we are very happy with the Palestinian police here."

Rejoicing villagers strung Palestinian flags of red, green, black and white along the entrance to the area prison and presented departing Israeli guards with coffee and cola as a goodbye gift. They were asked to drink some themselves first.

Khalil Abu Alehyah, 45, an unemployed labourer, said the arrival of the PLO police reflected hopes for future full independence. "They are our symbol for the future," he said.

In all, about 300 PLO police took up positions through the night and early morning hours in Dahariya, Duraba, Baninain, Nubah and Yata.

Although Hebron itself is considered a centre of support for Mr. Arafat's Islamic fundamentalist opposition, in the villages support for his mainstream Fatah faction is strong.

Still, Dahariya was the home of a man who blew himself up on a bus in Jerusalem in August, killing five Israelis. And Yata, long

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sheltered a large number of Palestinian fighters, was the site of a 1994 suicide bombing that killed 29 people, including 22 Israelis.

## Turkish rivals agree pact following Islamic victory

ANKARA (AFP) — Outgoing Prime Minister Tansu Ciller and her centre-right rival Mesut Yilmaz, said Tuesday they wanted to join forces in a move that could block the path to power of a pro-Islamic party which topped Sunday's general election.

Laying aside bitter differences, Mr. Yilmaz, leader of the centre-right Motherland Party, told a joint news conference: "We are in agreement with prime minister Ciller on the necessity of forming a broad-based government for the benefit of Turkey."

"I'm hopeful that a solution based on reconciliation will be reached," Mr. Yilmaz said.

For her part, Ms. Ciller, leader of the centre-right True Path Party, said, "We consider positively a coalition government with the Motherland Party. A government which will successfully handle all domestic and foreign issues is being sought."

Both Ms. Ciller and Mr. Yilmaz had been under intense pressure from certain sectors to bury their differences and block the governmental aspirations of the Welfare Party which came short of the polls, but fell short of an absolute majority.

Earlier Tuesday, Necmettin

tin Erbakan, the Welfare Party chief, said he was ready to form a coalition with any party.

Mr. Erbakan, whose party won 158 seats out of 550 in Sunday's vote — 118 short of an overall majority — urged other parties to "stop quarrelling and force themselves to serve the people as well as possible."

True Path won 135 seats and The Motherland Party 132 seats.

Only two other parties managed to win ten per cent of votes, the barrier required to enter parliament. These were the Democratic left party with 75 seats and the republican people's party with 50.

All four secular parties rejected forming a coalition with the Welfare Party.

The two conservative parties are a tantalising nine seats short of an absolute majority, and will need the support of smaller left-leaning parties to keep Welfare out of government.

Ms. Ciller and Mr. Yilmaz did not specify whether it was planned that at least one of the left-wing parties would be included in the coalition or would support a minority government. However, they said talks would continue.

They added that the leaders of the two smaller left-

wing parties had "a constructive approach" to the formation of a new government.

Motherland leader Yilmaz had what he called "fruitful" talks on Tuesday with Bulent Ecevit, leader of the Democratic left party, and added that it was "imperative" for parties in general to come together.

Ms. Ciller, meanwhile, had a telephone conversation with Deniz Baykal, leader of the Social Democratic Republican People's Party.

Analysts had said the biggest obstacle to a True Path-Motherland coalition was the intense personal hostility between Ms. Ciller and Yilmaz, who traded harsh insults during the election campaign, accusing each other of corruption and incompetence.

But on Tuesday, there appeared to be a warm atmosphere between Ms. Ciller and Yilmaz, although it was unclear who would head any coalition they brokered.

Some commentators suggested a solution to the dilemma of who would be rightful leader of a coalition, would be to nominate a third person, but there were no obvious candidates for that role.

Traditionally, the president appoints the leader of

(Continued on page 7)

## Peres says no change in Israel's nuclear policy

HAIFA, Israel (AFP) — Prime Minister Shimon Peres denied on Tuesday any change in Israel's nuclear policy after indicating last week that the Jewish state would give up its "nuclear" option in exchange for an overall Middle East peace.

"We have repeated a thousand times that negotiations on a treaty banning non-conventional weapons, including chemical, nuclear and biological, could not be reached until a global peace had been established in the region," Mr. Peres said.

"This global peace must include all Arab countries in the region, including Iraq and Libya, as well as Iran," Mr. Peres said during a visit to a school in the northern Israeli town of Haifa.

On Friday, Mr. Peres said: "Give us peace and we will give up the nuclear (option). If there is peace, we could denuclearise the Middle East."

But he refused to say if



Shimon Peres

Israel possessed nuclear weapons, choosing instead to stick to the Jewish state's traditional formula that it would not be the first to introduce them into the region.

International experts have said that Israel is the only Middle East state to possess nuclear weapons and have put its arsenal at 200 warheads.

Mr. Peres also said on Tuesday that Israel faced

hard decisions regarding the peace process, not only with Syria but with Lebanon as well. He said that Israel has "no territorial claim to water" in Lebanon, where it occupies a self-declared "security zone" in the southern part of the country.

The prime minister also accused the right-wing opposition in Israel of wanting to drag out peace negotiations with Syria, which began Wednesday in the United States for three days of intensive talks, followed by further discussions a week later.

"Those who accuse us of going too fast with Syria want the negotiations to last 10 years, which would cost more lives and money," Mr. Peres said.

Asked about an Israeli withdrawal from the Golan Heights, seized from Syria in the 1967 Middle East war, he said: "The problem is not if we will come down from the Golan, but if we obtain peace."

## Fariz to succeed Nabulsi as CBJ chief

AMMAN (J.T.) — A decision has been taken by the Cabinet this week to appoint Ziyad Fariz as the new governor of the Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ) to replace Mohammad Said Nabulsi, who resigned early this month. An official announcement has not been made, however, until a Royal Decree is issued to confirm the appointment, an informed source close to the prime ministry has said. According to the source, the choice has been narrowed down between Dr. Fariz and Michel Marto, the CBJ deputy governor, but Dr. Fariz was finally selected to the post.

Dr. Nabulsi steered the Central Bank for over 20 years except for a short period when he headed ESCWA in Baghdad and when he worked as senior official at the Arab Monetary Fund in Abu Dhabi. During his second term

from 1989 until now, Dr. Nabulsi was very successful in rebuilding the country's monetary and banking system after the financial crisis and the devaluation of the dinar in 1988.

Dr. Fariz, born in Salt in 1943, obtained his masters and doctorate degrees from Keel University in Britain. He started his career as an economic researcher at the Central Bank before becoming the bank's director of studies and research between 1980 until 1982. In 1984, he was appointed secretary-general of the Ministry of Planning until 1989 when he was chosen as minister of industry and trade and afterwards he served as minister of planning.

In another move, Dr. Marto has submitted his resignation from the post of deputy governor after holding it since 1979.

## 700 jailed in Iraq — Kabariti

AMMAN (AP) — Iraq has jailed some 700 Jordanians, many for minor offences, but acknowledges holding only 57, the foreign minister said Tuesday.

Foreign minister Abdul Karim Kabariti said Jordan has held negotiations with Iraq over the last few months, but that has resulted in the release of "only 23 of them."

"Later we received news that the 23 who were released were apprehended again and were sent to Abu Ghreib prison" outside Baghdad, Mr. Kabariti said.

"There are about 700 Jordanian prisoners and detainees in Iraq, but Iraq says there are only 57," Mr. Kabariti told the Associated Press.

Many of the Jordanians have been held for relatively minor offences such as not declaring foreign currency upon arrival in Iraq, or not obtaining appropriate entry documents, Jordanian officials have said.

Jordan "will continue to make all the efforts to free all the Jordanian prisoners and detainees from Iraq," Mr. Kabariti said.

هذه احسن النسخ



## France pledges troops to UAE if threatened

DUBAI (R) — France has pledged to rush tens of thousands of troops and hundreds of aircraft to defend the United Arab Emirates (UAE) if threatened, Gulf Arab sources said Tuesday.

A senior military source told Reuters France pledged to rush up to 70,000 troops of a rapid reaction force, despatch up to 120 jet fighters, 200 helicopters and other maritime, transport and electronic warfare aircraft to the region to defend the oil-rich UAE if attacked.

The pledge, a follow up to a January 1995 defence accord, was made in a military pact signed last week in Paris. It details steps France is willing to take to safeguard the UAE's stability and security.

The French defence ministry gave no details of the accord, and a spokeswoman said last week no additional details were immediately available for public release.

"The first accord was broad based, this is a detailed military pact dealing with threats — internal and external," said the military source, who is familiar with the pact.

The UAE is seeking joint defence arrangements as seen as extra defensive capabilities at Abu Dhabi — with several world and regional

powers to deter any potential threats.

The UAE has a defence pact with the United States, details of which are yet to be worked out. It is currently involved in advanced talks with Britain to forge a similar agreement.

UAE officials say the deal with France is the firmest commitment by a world power to Abu Dhabi's security. "The five other Gulf Arab states have also pledged to send 30,000 troops to the rescue if sparsely-populated UAE is attacked, military sources said."

The UAE does not publicly call non-Arab Iran a potential threat but they express concern over its rearmament programme, including the deployment of submarines, and war-like statements.

"When we raise the voice of peace, Iran raises the voice of war and threats," UAE Foreign Minister Rashid Abdullah Al Nuaimi said this month in reference to repeated failures to sit down to discuss a dispute over three strategic Gulf islands.

It terms Iran's presence on the islands as "occupation." The latest pact with France includes undisclosed measures to confront potential internal threats. Some 75 per cent of the UAE's 2.2 million

population are expatriates including a large Iranian community.

Abu Dhabi, which has no false illusions about its limited military might despite an active arms procurement programme, is especially concerned with the illegal presence in the UAE of up to 52,000 Iranians.

"Some of them could be a threat to the internal front if the UAE is involved in an external conflict... the UAE can't fight two wars at the same time," said the source.

In October, visiting Defence Minister Charles Millon told UAE President Sheikh Zayed Ben Al Sultan Al Nahayan "that he can depend on France's word and pledge."

"When it signs a defence pact with a country, it respects that treaty," he added in reference to France's military intervention in September to foil a coup in the Comoro Islands.

Such treaties also facilitate arms transfer deals with the UAE which already has several weapons purchase accords with France including one in 1993 worth \$3.62 billion for tanks and a \$235 million order in March for helicopters made by the Franco-German Eurocopter.



TURKISH ELECTIONS: Islamist Welfare (Refah) Party leader Necmettin Erbakan gets into his car Tuesday while surrounded by supporters, following a news conference at his party headquarter in Ankara (Reuters photo)

## Arafat's challenger vows to annul PLO-Israel deal

By Wafa Amr  
Reuters

AL BIREH, West Bank — Samiha Khalil, the only candidate challenging Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat for presidency of the Palestinian Authority, pledged Tuesday to work to annul the PLO-Israel self-rule accord if she won.

"I will do my best, together with all Palestinians, to cancel the Oslo accord because it is unjust," Ms. Khalil told a news conference held to announce she was officially running against Mr. Arafat in the Jan. 20 elections.

Ms. Khalil, 70, faces an uphill struggle running against the man who for decades symbolised the Palestinian struggle for statehood. But she said she was undaunted by the challenge.

"I don't believe anything is impossible. Yes, I believe I will win," Ms. Khalil said.

Ms. Khalil said the breakthrough 1993 Oslo accord, under which Israel has begun handing back parts of the West Bank captured in the 1967 Middle East war, did not meet

Palestinian needs.

"It is my conviction that the Oslo accords fall short of achieving the fundamental objectives of our people, that of full sovereignty and independence," she said.

"We want an independent Palestinian state with real sovereignty and permanent and comprehensive peace can be achieved when rights are restored," Ms. Khalil said.

Ms. Khalil, a motherly figure famous as a charity worker and political activist, was detained six times by Israel, placed under house arrest and banned from travelling for 15 years.

Despite her opposition to the peace deal Mr. Arafat agreed with then-Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin in 1993, Ms. Khalil pledged to work with the PLO leader if she won.

"The president and leader Abu Ammar (Mr. Arafat) will not lose anything, he is the president of PLO, he is the chairman of the PLO's Executive Committee and he will remain so, so we will work together," she said.

While tens of thousands of Palestinians took to the

streets recently to welcome Mr. Arafat in the West Bank cities of Jenin, Nablus and Bethlehem after the evacuation of Israeli troops, Ms. Khalil was collecting 5,000 signatures to back her nomination for presidency.

"I gathered 7,000 signatures in just four days," Ms. Khalil said. "Because I am a woman there has been a stir when I announced I was nominating myself... and my family and friends were against it because they were afraid it would exhaust me."

Ms. Khalil said she was sure of victory because "people are whispering they are not happy with what is happening on their land."

She refused to speculate what percentage of votes she would get, but stressed she had the backing of both opponents and proponents of the peace process.

PLO officials said Mr. Arafat was happy Ms. Khalil was running against him because he wanted the election to be a genuine contest.

"Arafat does not want the election results to be 99.99 per cent as is the case with other Arab leaders," said one PLO official.

## Crowds gather for 'apparition' of Jesus Christ in Tehran

TEHRAN (AFP) — Large crowds have been gathering in front of a house in the Iranian capital in the past few days after rumours spread about the apparition of Jesus Christ there.

Hundreds of Armenians and Muslims, dressed in their best, show up every day before the small "miracle" house in eastern Tehran for an opportunity to touch its concrete walls, where neighbours said an image of a bearded Jesus, dressed in white and holding a cane, appeared on Wednesday.

According to "testimonies" provided by residents of the neighbourhood, where a large Armenian Christian community lives, the daughter of the owner of the house witnessed the "illuminated white image on the wall and asked him to heal her uncle and pay her money so she could pay her rent."

She told her friends later that her wishes had been granted and the story soon spread, attracting hundreds of people from the district to the house in Avanesian Street.

The apparition has since become a main topic of discussion for the several thousand-strong Armenian community in the district. "One has to be a believer to be able to observe the face of Jesus Christ and the cross on the walls of the house," said Albert, a young Armenian Christian

visiting the house. "The apparition will come at night because one can see the image better in dark," he said.

Police evacuated and sealed off the house immediately after the word of the apparition circulated in the town but an officer told AFP they had received no order to disperse the crowd: "They will get tired and leave," he said.

Several residents and shopkeepers in the street said they had expected the apparition because it was "written in holy books."

"When the world is filled with injustice, sins and blasphemy and when poverty and social pressure become intolerable, Jesus will come to restore justice," said Vasgen, an Armenian mechanic who had come to touch the wall.

Sceptics, however, found the story hard to believe. "This is not true. It's an illusion," said Ara, an economics-major student from Tehran University who was there "out of curiosity."

"Why would Jesus descend on a modest house in a poor neighbourhood," a young man asked, rejoicing and laughing with several friends who seemed happy to see the animation the rumour had brought to their poor neighbourhood.

Around 250,000 Armenians live in Iran, whose population is mainly Shiite Muslims.

## Press watchdog condemns Egypt's sentencing of journalists

CAIRO (AFP) — The French watchdog Reporters Sans Frontiers (RSF) condemned on Tuesday the sentencing of two Egyptian opposition journalists to two years in prison for slander under a controversial new press law.

The RSF "protests the condemnation of" Abdul Al Baqari, editor in chief of Al Ahali newspaper, and reporter Sarwat Surur the group said in an open letter to Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak received by AFP.

It asked Mr. Mubarak "to use his influence to lift the sentences" against "the two" and that the new law "be revised" in a way "favouring freedom of the press."

The two were sentenced on Sunday to two years in prison

and given fines of nearly \$15,000 each for a slanderous police officer in an article accusing him of influence peddling.

They were the first journalists to be sentenced under the new law passed in May allowing sentence of up to 15 years in prison for slander which provoked outrage from journalists afraid it would muzzle criticism of the state.

Both have requested a new trial before the court in the northern town of Damanhur because they were sentenced in their absence. They have not been imprisoned.

RSF urged the president to "eliminate the prison sentences allowed by the new law because they represent a threat to the freedom of journalists to exercise their

duties."

The penalties "considerably restrain the freedom to inform. Insulting a government official is normally only punishable by a strong fine and a prison sentence is not considered," the RSF said.

After the passing of the new law, Mr. Mubarak sought to calm journalists' anger saying it would be "put to sleep," implying it would not be implemented, while a state-formed commission drew up new press legislation.

Journalists, who previously threatened an unprecedented strike to protest the law, decided Sunday to extend a deadline for a new law until March 15 to allow the commission to continue working.

## Seminar on promoting pluralistic Arab media to be held in Sanaa

THE FINAL programme of the UNESCO sponsored and organised "Seminar on Promoting Independent and Pluralistic Arab Media" scheduled to be held in Sanaa Jan. 7-11, 1995 is now ready.

According to the programme, the seminar will be launched by an opening ceremony in which representatives of the Yemeni government, the U.N. and UNESCO will address the audience. They will be followed by a representative of the Arab media who will give the keynote address, the seminar's first substance speech.

The first working session will start in the afternoon under the theme "The Situation of the Media in the Arab World: The issue of Independence and Pluralism." From there on, the seminar will take the shape of paper presentations in the mornings, and working groups in the afternoons.

The morning session of the next day will address the theme of "Public Service Media." The working groups in the afternoon will be on "Women and the Media," and "Monitoring of Press Freedom." The third day will address legal and political aspects in free and pluralistic media. The issue of press censorship will weigh heavily on this day. The afternoon workshops will deal with strengthening of professional organisations and training.

The training dimension will also take up the next day, while Thursday (Jan. 11) will be devoted to the final report and declaration of the seminar.

Some 150 media personalities representing all the Arab countries and the relevant international organisations will attend the seminar, which will be held at Haddah Hotel. In addition, key and effective international organisations such as Article

XIX, Committee to Protect Journalists, FIEJ, Amnesty International, and others will send representatives.

"The choice of Sanaa as the meeting place for this important media event comes to underline the world community's support for Yemen's efforts in working towards an open and free press. I hope that the Arab media will use this seminar to overcome the obstacles that hamper freedom of the press in the Arab World," said Neji Fritj head of UNIC and the official spokesman for the seminar. He also said that the caliber of the participants gives hope that something tangible will come out of this seminar.

The seminar will lead to the Sanaa Declaration which will outline the participants' planned course of action as well as what the U.N. and UNESCO are willing and able to do in support of a free and pluralistic Arab media — Yemen Times.

## Kuwaiti parliament ratifies U.N. pact on human rights

KUWAIT (R) — Kuwait's parliament on Tuesday authorised the government to sign an international human rights convention against torture.

All 37 attending members of parliament, including cabinet ministers, voted for the ratification of the U.N. convention against torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

The measure requires the approval of Emir Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmad Al Sabah before its enactment, a practice that usually takes a few weeks.

The house decided to delay a vote on two other international human rights pacts — international covenant on economic, social and cultural rights and the international covenant on civil and political rights.

Parliamentarians, citing fears of contradictions with the Islamic laws, sent the two agreements to the house's foreign affairs committee for advice.

"If such contradictions were proved the conventions will still be endorsed, but reservations will be placed on some articles," MP Yaqoub Hayati told Reuters.

By according to the agreements, Kuwait will be obliged periodically to render a public account to U.N. bodies overseeing compliance with the pacts, human rights experts say.

Tuesday's measure will provide for further international scrutiny of the state's rights record following increased interest in the issue in the aftermath of its 1991 liberation from Iraqi occupation, they say.

"Kuwait will benefit from increased openness. This

leaves no room for accusations in relation to human rights in Kuwait," an official, who did not wish to be identified, said.

Kuwait has been criticised for its failure to prosecute people who killed Palestinian residents immediately after the 1991 Gulf war. Palestinians were accused of siding with Iraq during the seven-month occupation.

Officials say any killings that took place occurred in circumstances of unusual lawlessness and say they ended when the government returned and took control three months later.

Kuwait in February 1994 ratified the 1979 U.N. convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women but lodged reservations on clauses guaranteeing women the vote and equal rights in child custody cases.

### NEWS IN BRIEF

#### Car in Arafat motorcade crashes

GAZA CITY (AP) — A car in Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat's motorcade crashed into a tree Tuesday and the driver was killed, police said. Two passengers were slightly injured. Mr. Arafat was not present when the accident occurred. The victim, Iyad Kronz, 21, was driving one of several cars that escorted Mr. Arafat to Gaza City, the car hit a tree. Mr. Arafat's drivers are notorious for their reckless driving and have been seen scaring people off the streets.

#### Mitterrand goes on Nile cruise

CAIRO (AP) — Former French President Francois Mitterrand, ailing from prostate cancer, has been sightseeing in the southern resort of Aswan, residents of the area reported Tuesday. Mr. Mitterrand, 79, arrived in Aswan Sunday night to spend Christmas and the new year, as has been his habit for several years. He ended his 14 years as president last May because of ill health. He was seen sightseeing Monday, looking tired and walking on crutches with two security men helping him along. His illness did not stop him from taking a boat ride on the Nile, though he chose a closed vessel to protect him from the wind. Aswan is a popular tourist resort 685 kilometre south of Cairo.

#### Kaaba washed by Prince Majed

JIDDAH (AP) — A leading member of the Saudi ruling family, Prince Majed, Saturday led the ritual washing of the Kaaba, Islam's holiest shrine in Mecca. The official Saudi press agency said Prince Majed, governor of the holy city of Mecca, presided over the religious ceremony on behalf of King Fahd, who is resting after his discharge from hospital Dec. 7. The washing of Kaaba, a square stone structure built by the Prophet Abraham, is performed twice a year with performed water. Muslims around the world turn to Kaaba to pray five times a day. The mosque of the 7th century Prophet Mohammed in Medina, also in Saudi Arabia, is Islam's second holiest shrine.

#### Egyptian police raid poppy, cannabis plantation

MINYA, Egypt (AFP) — Hundreds of police in gunboats netted 750,000 cannabis and poppy plants worth a million dollars in a huge raid on an island family of drug dealers in south Egypt on Tuesday, police said. More than 500 police in the boats swept down on an island in the Nile near Nagas Abdel Rusul village in Asyut province, 380 kilometres south of Cairo. After a gunbattle with farmers tending the extensive hashish and opium fields, police seized the island and arrested nine of the members of the Magawid clan, police said. The family had used government-owned land on the island to grow the plants, police said.

### JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 77311-19

#### PROGRAMME TWO

14:00 Inspector Gadget  
14:30 China Writer  
15:00 Bill Nye the Science Guy  
15:30 Amazing Stories  
16:00 The Adventures of the Black Stallion  
16:30 Sky Trackers  
17:00 Jinx  
19:00 News in French  
19:15 Magazine — Sports Et Musique  
19:30 News Headlines  
19:30 Anything for a Laugh  
20:00 Doc. — The Nature of Things  
20:25 The Bold and the Beautiful  
21:10 Star Trek  
22:00 News in English  
22:25 Prison  
23:00 The Nutcracker — A Fantasy on Ice  
00:20 Comedy — Grace Under Fire

#### PRAYER TIMES

05:46 Fajr  
06:29 (Sunrise) Dhuhur  
11:36 Dhuhur  
14:28 'Asr  
16:43 Maghrib  
18:06 'Isha

### CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church  
Swattha, Tel. 810740  
Assumption of God Church, Tel. 632785  
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624990  
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440  
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757  
Terrasanta Church Tel. 622366  
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541  
Anglican Church Tel. 652826  
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 77261  
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 77261  
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751  
Armenian International Church Tel. 623238  
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 623438  
German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 845457  
The Latter-Day Saints Tel. 654932  
Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691  
The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295

#### WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.  
It will be relatively hot and skies clear. It will be foggy in the early morning. In Amman, it will be partly cloudy and seas calm. Winds will be

### JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

northwesterly moderate.

Min./Max. temp.  
Amman ..... 5/14  
Aqaba ..... 11/24  
Deserts ..... 3/12  
Jordan Valley ..... 9/23

Yesterday's high temperatures:  
Amman 13 Aqaba 22. Humidity readings: Amman 30 per cent, Aqaba 32 per cent.

#### USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY  
AMMAN:  
Dr. Bassem Karadshah ..... 759200  
Dr. Mukhlis Hattash ..... 819220  
Dr. Mousther Al Qunai ..... 779599  
Dr. Abdul Wahab Awad ..... 846070  
Firas pharmacy ..... 661912  
Ferdous pharmacy ..... 778336  
Al Asema pharmacy ..... 637055  
Nairoukh pharmacy ..... 623672  
Al Salam pharmacy ..... 636730  
Yacoub pharmacy ..... 649495  
Shmoisan pharmacy ..... 637660  
Nairoukh pharmacy ..... 623672  
Najib pharmacy ..... 847632  
IRBID:  
Dr. Ahmad Qanu ..... 281741

Al Quds pharmacy ..... (—)  
ZARQA:  
Dr. Rabi Atallah ..... 984424  
Khalid pharmacy ..... 985417

#### EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre ..... 637111  
Civil Defence Department ..... 661111  
Civil Defence Immediate  
Rescue ..... 63041  
Civil Defence Emergency ..... 199  
Rescue Police ..... 621111, 637777  
Fire Brigade ..... 617101  
Blood Bank ..... 775121  
University Hospital ..... 845845  
Traffic Police ..... 896390  
Public Security Department ..... 63031  
Hotel Complaints ..... 605800  
Price Complaints ..... 661176  
Water and Sewerage  
Complaints ..... 897467  
Amman Municipality  
Complaints ..... 787111  
Telephone Information (directory assistance) ..... 121  
Overseas Calls ..... 010230  
Central Amman Telephone  
Repairs ..... 623401  
Abdali Telephone Repairs ..... 661101  
Jordan Television ..... 773111  
Radio Jordan ..... 774111  
Water Authority ..... 680100  
Jordan Electricity Authority ..... 815615  
Electric Power

Company ..... 636381  
RJ Flight Information ..... 08-53200  
Queen Alia Intl. Airport ..... 08-53200

#### HOSPITALS

AMMAN:  
Hussein Medical Centre ..... \$1381/32  
Khalidi Maternity, J. Amn ..... 642816  
Akileh Maternity, J. Amn. ..... 64341/2  
Jabal Amman Maternity ..... 642362  
Malhas, J. Amman ..... 636140  
Palestine, Shmeisani ..... 607071  
Shmeisani Hospital ..... 669131  
University Hospital ..... 845845  
Al-Mustashir Hospital ..... 6672719  
The Islamic, Abdali ..... 66612727  
Al-Ahli, Abdali ..... 6641646  
Italian, Al-Muhajreen ..... 777101/3  
Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafieh ..... 775111/26  
Army, J. Amn ..... 891611/15  
Queen Alia Hospital ..... 60224050  
Amal Hospital ..... 674155  
The Arab Centre for Heart and  
Special Surgery ..... 865199  
ZARQA:  
Zarqa Govt. Hospital ..... (09)983323  
Zarqa National Hospital ..... (09)983323  
Jbn Sina Hospital ..... (09)900560  
Al Hikma Modern Hospital ..... (09)909090  
IBRD:  
Princess Basma Hospital ..... (02)275555  
Greek Catholic Hospital ..... (02)727275  
Ibn Al Nafies Hospital ..... (02)471700

AQABA:  
Princess Haya Hospital ..... (03)314111

#### FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (06)53200-5, where it should always be verified.

#### ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)  
08:35 ..... Jeddah (RJ)  
08:55 ..... Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)  
09:00 ..... Damascus (RJ)  
10:10 ..... Larnaca (RJ)  
10:45 New York, Amsterdam (RJ)  
16:45 ..... Istanbul (RJ)  
17:35 ..... Toronto, Montreal (RJ)  
18:00 ..... Brussels, Paris (RJ)  
18:00 ..... Madrid, Geneva (RJ)  
18:15 ..... Frankfurt, Vienna (RJ)  
18:25 ..... London, Berlin (RJ)  
19:45 ..... Rome (RJ)  
22:45 ..... Aqaba (RJ)  
23:20 ..... Beirut (RJ)

61:25 ..... Cairo (RJ)  
Other Flights (Terminal 2)  
09:20 ..... Cairo (MS)  
10:30 ..... Jeddah (SV)  
12:15 ..... Karachi, Abu Dhabi (PK)  
14:20 ..... Algiers (AF)  
20:00 ..... Sanaa (TY)  
20:10 ..... Beirut (ME)  
22:05 ..... Larnaca (CY)  
22:45 ..... Athens (OA)  
23:15 ..... Amsterdam (KL)  
23:59 ..... London (BA)

#### DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)  
09:45 ..... Istanbul, Rome (RJ)  
10:15 ..... Amsterdam, New York (RJ)  
11:00 ..... Tunis, Casablanca (RJ)  
11:25 ..... Berlin, London (RJ)  
11:30 ..... Istanbul (RJ)  
19:30 ..... Colombo (RJ)  
20:05 ..... Riyadh, Dhahran (RJ)  
20:15 ..... Beirut (RJ)  
21:00 ..... New Delhi (RJ)  
21:10 ..... Calcutta, Bangkok (RJ)  
21:15 ..... Aqaba, Cairo (RJ)  
21:15 ..... Dubai, Muscat (RJ)  
22:45 ..... Sanaa (TY)

#### Other Flights (Terminal 2)

07:45 ..... Beirut (ME)  
09:15 ..... London (KJ)  
10:40 ..... Cairo (MS)  
12:00 ..... Jeddah (SV)  
13:25 ..... Abu Dhabi, Karachi (PK)  
15:20 ..... Sharjah (AH)  
21:00 ..... Sanaa (TY)  
21:00 ..... Aden (DY)

### HIJAZ RAILWAY

Dep. Amman ..... 8:00 a.m. every Monday  
Arr. Damascus ..... 5:00 p.m. every Monday  
Dep. Damascus ..... 7:30 a.m. every Sunday  
Arr. Amman ..... 5:00 p.m. every Sunday

#### MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in file per kg.

Apple ..... 700/500  
Banana ..... 680  
Banana (Mukannas) ..... 680  
Banana (imported) ..... 850/650  
Cabbage ..... 110/50  
Carrot ..... 270/150  
Cauliflower ..... 220/150  
Cucumbers (large) ..... 150/120  
Cucumbers (small) ..... 130/80  
Eggplant ..... 200/120  
Garlic ..... 750/600  
Grape Fruit ..... 220/150  
Lemon ..... 220/150  
Marrow (large) ..... 250/180  
Marrow (small) ..... 150/80  
Onion (green) ..... 260/180  
Onion (dry) ..... 230/150  
Orange ..... 550/400  
Pepper (hot) ..... 260/180  
Pepper (sweet) ..... 250/180  
Potato ..... 250/180  
Radish ..... 140/80  
Spinach ..... 130/80  
String Beans ..... 370/400  
Tangerine ..... 200/200  
Tomato ..... 170/100



## Prince Hassan to open squash centre today

By a Jordan Times Staff reporter

AMMAN — The Kingdom's sports facilities will gain a vital addition Wednesday with the opening of the Al Hussein Youth City.

His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan will inaugurate the centre which includes six courts, including two centre courts seating 700 and 200 spectators respectively.

Al Hussein Youth City includes the capital's only international soccer stadium as well as the Sports Palace court which hosts volleyball, basketball, handball and other competitions.

Considered to be one of

the most highly sophisticated squash centres of the region, the Al Hussein sports centre will soon be hosting the 8th Asian squash championship which opens in Amman Jan. 8.

Thirteen Asian nations will be converging on Amman starting Jan. 6 to take part in the competition. The teams represent Bahrain, Hong Kong, India, South Korea, Kuwait, Lebanon, Malaysia, Pakistan, Palestine, Sri Lanka, Singapore, Taiwan, and Jordan.

During the 10-day long championship, the General Assembly of the Asian Squash Federation will hold its meetings in Amman.



## Ministry proposes law on placement of children of 'unfit' parents

By Lola Keilani  
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The Ministry of Social Development is proposing a new law that would grant the government the right to place an "abused" child with a foster family only after the court of law decides that the child's parents or legal guardians were "unfit" to care for him/her.

The law, drafted by the ministry, along with human rights activists, specialists in child education, and non-governmental organisations, does not clearly define what is meant by an "abused" child or an "unfit" parent.

Nevertheless, the draft law expands the role of the

Higher Council for the Children to allow "abused" children or citizens aware of cases of neglect or abuse towards children to report these cases to the council.

After a court decision that the child's parents or guardians are unfit to take care of him/her, the government will then place the child with a foster family, which, by criteria, should be Jordanian and childless, and with certain social and educational "standards," or may decide to place the child in a welfare institution.

Lawyer and human rights activist Asma Khader, who participated in drawing up the draft, said as long as the guardian (parent) has the right to discipline his/her

child, the application of the law will largely depend on its interpretation by the judges.

Existing laws give the guardian or parent the right of discipline, which includes corporal punishment.

"What one judge considers abuse another might find only a form of discipline," Ms. Khader said, explaining that bruises found on a child could be "interpreted as part of that right."

According to Ms. Khader, articles in the draft law are not legally binding. They are closer to being "recommendations than laws," she said.

As an example, she pointed to articles in the draft

law that state that children have the right to invest their time in useful activities, such as sports and cultural events, and that children have a right to self-expression, saying these types of articles were "not precise nor concise enough to protect children's rights."

Ms. Khader also criticised the draft law as lacking in legal technicalities.

Some of the articles of the draft law are based on the International Charter for the Child's Rights, which Jordan is a signatory of, along with other countries.

For this draft law to be adopted, the Cabinet, then Parliament, have to endorse it.

## Seminar reviews municipal councils' role in development of tourism

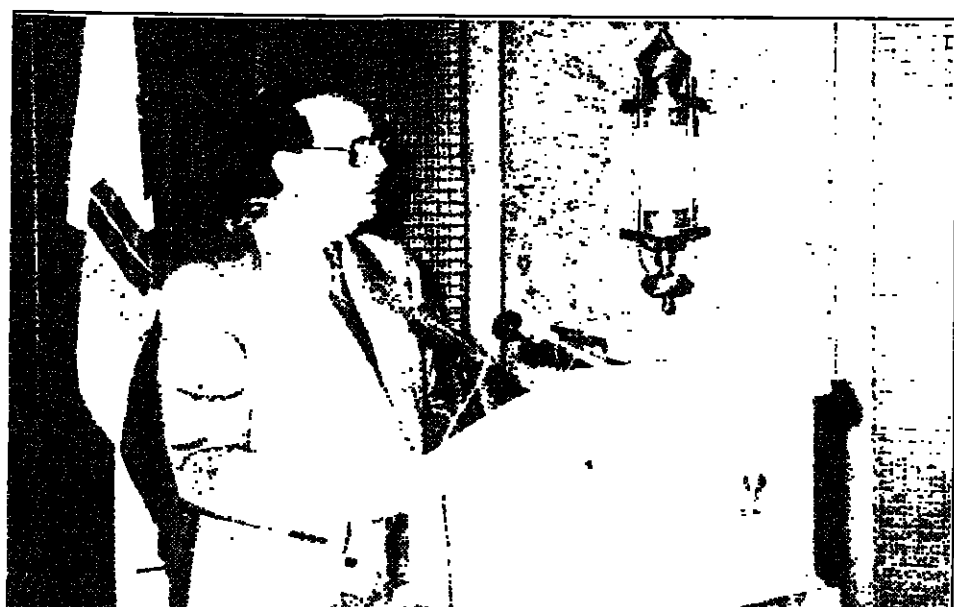
AQABA (Petra) — Participants in the three-day symposium on the role of municipal councils in local development Tuesday discussed two working papers on tourism promotion and the development of national and cultural responsibility.

The symposium was opened Monday by Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker who stressed his government's interest in activating the role of municipal councils in community development.

Addressing the opening session, Sharif Zeid emphasised the importance of community participation in the development process.

He called on the municipal councils to work as one team and to maintain the councils' integrity and objectivity and to work towards serving the public interest rather than narrow personal interests.

"Promoting tourism cannot be achieved in isolation from local administrations and non-governmental organisations at the national and sub-national levels," Minister of Tourism Abdullah Khatib said in the pre-



Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Bin Shaker Monday addresses the opening of a three-day symposium on municipal councils roles in community development (Petra photo)

sentation of his working paper.

Mr. Khatib said tourism has become an extremely important sector in the world economy, noting that the number of world tourists totalled 537 million last year, yielding some \$341 billion in profit.

He pointed out that the tourism market represents more than 8 per cent of world exports, and that it even exceeds oil exports which represent almost 6.5 percent of world exports. The Arab region occupies only 2 per cent of the total world tourism market,

according to the minister.

Mr. Khatib called on municipal councils to preserve Jordan's unique tourist and archaeological attractions, and to save them from alterations caused by organisation planning.

## Jordanian scholar wins literary award

AMMAN (J.T.) — President of the Royal Academy of Islamic Civilisation and Research Nassereddin Assad Tuesday won the Arab World's most prestigious prize for writers and intellectuals, held in the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

Dr. Assad, who was awarded the Fourth Sultan Ibn Al-Owais prize for Literary Criticism, for his work on 60 research and study papers and 14 books, all of which dealt with Arabic literature.

"My main work was a number of criticism studies of pre-Islamic poetry, which I take pride in," Dr. Assad, also a member in the Upper House of Parliament told the Jordan Times. He added that he was pleased to have won such a distinguished prize.

Although the winner, a former minister of higher education, did not apply to the competition, he said that someone must have nominated him.

He added he had no knowledge who that person was.

The council supervising the award, which has a capital of \$ 6.8 million, and is named after a businessman who was also a poet, will distribute \$500,000 among the five winners.

This year's prize, which is given out to promote Arabic culture, was awarded to Abdul Wahab Bayati from Iraq, who received the poetry prize, Edward Kharrat from Egypt, who received the novel and drama prize, Awatef Abdul Rahman and Muhammed Ramhi from Egypt and Iraq respectively shared the social sciences prize.

In 1982 Dr. Assad won the King Faisal Global Award for Arabic literature.

As for this year's award, Dr. Assad told the Jordan Times he will spend the prize money of \$100,000 on further research.

## Man receives three-month prison term for 'honour' killing

By Rana Hussein  
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — A 22-year-old man was sentenced Tuesday to three-months imprisonment by the Criminal Court for the murder of his 17-year-old sister in a crime of honour on July 27.

Ibrahim Musa, who was charged with the premeditated murder of his 17-year-old married sister Fatieh, first received six months but the sentence was reduced to three months because his family dropped charges.

The court also amended the premeditated murder charges against the defendant to third degree murder because the court said Mr. Musa committed the crime in a fit of fury to "cleanse his family's honour."

According to court documents, Fatieh had an extra-marital relationship, and on the night before the incident she left her house at 1:30 a.m. in Abu Sabah village to meet her lover.

The document said that Fatieh's brother found his sister at her uncle's house, where she had sought refuge after learning that her "escape" had been discovered.

"When Fatieh told her brother of the story he drew a gun and shot her once in

the head, then turned himself in to police," the document said.

Also Tuesday, the Criminal Court heard the testimony of the father of a 32-year-old woman, Muna M., who was killed Aug. 12.

According to court documents, Muna had helped a man rape the suspect's girlfriend in a brothel the day before the murder. Khalid, 27, allegedly killed Muna to avenge the alleged rape of his girlfriend.

Turki Ali Khizai, 50, told the court that his daughter Muna had run away from home five years ago to marry the man she loved.

"I never heard anything concerning my daughter for five years until the police informed me that my daughter (the victim) was found dead in Amman National Park," Mr. Khizai told the court.

The decomposing body of Muna M. was found two weeks after the murder in the park with one bullet to the head and several stab wounds to the chest, according to court documents. Parts of the murder victim's body were mutilated.

Presiding Judge Abdul Rahman Tawfiq set Jan. 11 to continue hearing the case.

Meanwhile, the Criminal

Court Monday acquitted a 48-year-old man of the double murder charges of a woman and her six-month-old baby in Shmeisani March 27.

The court discharged Majid Sabayleh because there was no strong evidence to indict or link him with the murder. In addition, the court said, it relied on one of the 23 witnesses who testified that the suspect was at a coffee shop at the time the murder was committed.

The bodies of Maha and her son, Samer, were found in an apartment which the suspect had rented in Shmeisani.

According to court documents, the murder victim, a mother of five children who was married to a man in Irbid, eloped from her home in 1992 and was since reported missing by her husband.

The documents added that the woman had several extra-marital affairs including her affair with Mr. Sabayleh whom she was living with. The baby, who was also found murdered in the apartment, was the son of Mr. Sabayleh.

Mr. Sabayleh, however, was sentenced to one-year for committing adultery.

## Health official points to shortage in medical equipment, personnel

By Samir Hijawi  
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The director of the Maternal and Child Health (MCH) department at the Ministry of Health, Usama Badran, Thursday said that the increase in the number of health centres around the country was not being matched with a proportionate increase in the number of nursing and medical cadres, midwives and medical equipment.

Dr. Badran pointed to a shortage in medical and nursing cadres, ultrasound equipment, dental clinics and medicines.

He noted, however, an increase in the number of people visiting the ministry's health centres, where they receive free medical services.

Poverty, low income and high cost of treatment at private sector health facilities are behind the high

turnout at the ministry's health facilities, Dr. Badran said.

A total of 49,092 children benefited from health services provided by these centres in 1994, as compared to 15,000 children in 1976, according to Dr. Badran.

He revealed that 96 per cent of all children under one are immunised against diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus (DPT) and polio, and 92 per cent against measles.

Dr. Badran said that vaccines were given to all children free of charge through 278 maternal and child health centres spread throughout the country.

He added that these health centres provide vaccine services and advice on nutrition, in addition to diagnosis of early childhood disability.

Another medical officer, Abdul Rahim Jalal, said

health centres face great pressure due to the high number of patients seeking medical treatment. He said, the centres are not sufficiently manned to properly meet the high demand.

"Despite this," Dr. Jalal said, "we spare no effort to serve our patients, particularly in relation to the vaccines."

He stressed that the DPT, polio, measles, tuberculosis, and hepatitis B vaccines are given to children free of charge at the ministry's centres, and that the tetanus vaccine is also given free of charge to pregnant women, under the national immunisation programme.

To ensure that all children are medically insured, the Ministry of Health has recently formed a committee to carry out a study to cover around 300,000 under-six-year-olds by a health insurance scheme.



PROVINCIAL GOVERNORS: Newly appointed provincial governors take the oath of office in the presence of Minister of Interior Salameh Hammad Tuesday. The minister opened a week-long specialised training course for the newly-appointed provincial governors to orient them on the new administrative divisions system, which will enter into force as of Jan. 1. Addressing the opening session, Mr. Hammad stressed the need to safeguard Jordan's economic, cultural and educational achievements. He emphasised the importance of national unity, saying "our strength lies in our national unity which constitutes an inseparable and unbreakable web." (Petra photo)

## First session of Tawjihi exams begins today

AMMAN (Petra) — A total of 96,888 students today head for examination halls throughout the Kingdom to sit for the first part of the General Secondary Certificate or Tawjihi examinations, according to Ministry of Education sources.

Director General of the Examinations Department, Ahmad Salem said the figure includes 26,509 students in the scientific stream, 52,561 in the literary stream, 6,550 in the commercial stream, 3,779 in the agricultural stream, 5,207 in the vocational stream and 1,713 in the nursing stream.

Mr. Salem said examinations will start at 9.30 a.m., instead of 8.00 a.m., to allow students to arrive on time.

Mr. Salem said a total of 7,500 teachers will start correcting examination papers in Amman, Irbid, Salt, Zarqa, Karak and Ma'an as of Dec. 29.

He added that the ministry has made arrangements for hospitalised students or those serving prison terms, to take the examinations at a special centre set up for this purpose.

He also said that an examination hall was opened in Tunis for Jordanian students living there, who wish to sit for the exams.

Mr. Salem said 27 blind students, who will dictate their answers to examiners, are also taking the exams.

## Prince Ghazi attends JUST ceremony

RAMTHA (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein's Cultural Advisor Prince Ghazi Ben Mohammad Tuesday attended a special ceremony held at Jordan University of Science and Technology (JUST) to honour the university's outgoing president Kamel Ajlouni, who has been at the helm of the university for nearly nine years. The university's President Sa'ad Hijazi praised Dr. Ajlouni's leadership and reviewed achievements made ever since he took over in 1986. Dr. Ajlouni spoke of the continuous support of HRH Crown Prince Hassan. The ceremony was attended by presidents of the various Jordanian universities, deans of faculties and Ramtha's district governor.

## Satellite manufacture tenders to be launched

AMMAN (Petra) — Telecommunications Corporation Director General Walid Dweik Tuesday returned home from Rabat where he took part in the 76th session of the Arab Satellite Corporation (ARABSAT) Board of Directors, held there Dec. 18 to 24. Taking part in the meetings were representatives for Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Libya, Syria, Morocco and Egypt. In an arrival statement Mr. Dweik said the board authorised ARABSAT's executive office to invite tenders for the manufacture of the third satellite of the second generation, utilising findings of a consultancy study on feasibility of the new generation of Arab satellites. He said the first satellite of the second generation will be launched by mid-1996, the second in early January 1997. Mr. Dweik said the board also approved a regulation for imposing tariffs on telephone and TV services provided by ARABSAT.



## EXHIBITIONS

\* Works by artist Hind Nasser at Darat Al Funun (until Jan. 6).  
\* Photography by poet Ibrahim Nasrallah entitled "The Autobiography of an Eye" at Darat Al Funun (until Jan. 6).  
\* Photography exhibition "Biblical Itineraries" at the French Cultural Centre. (Until Dec. 30).

## MUSIC RECITAL

\* Recital of Eastern music at the Phoenix Gallery for Culture and Art, Gardens. Street at 6.00 p.m.

## CHRISTMAS SALE

\* Gifts and crafts by Suha Lallas Kassissieh at the Jordan Design and Trade Centre of the Noor Al Hussein Foundation, off Wadi Saqra Street (until Dec. 31).



## Moscow's man in Chechenya insists he is legitimate boss

MOSCOW (AFP) — Doku Zavgayev, head of the Moscow-installed government in Chechenya, said Tuesday he was the republic's legitimate elected leader despite a separatist boycott and evidence of fraud during the Russian-organised leadership ballot.

Mr. Zavgayev, who was also Chechenya's former Communist boss under the Soviet Union, told reporters here that "legitimate power has been restored to Chechenya, where 95 per cent of the people voted for the new republican leader."

The elections, held from Dec. 14 to 17, were characterised by widespread fraud and international observers were absent. Mr. Zavgayev was the only major candidate.

There were no electoral lists, and the polls were boycotted by the separatists loyal to independence leader Dzhokhar Dudayev, who was elected president in 1991, and several pro-Russian leaders, who denounced them as unde-

mocratic.

Mr. Zavgayev rejected the accusations of malpractice, arguing that the result was "incontrovertible."

"There were cases of fraud just like anywhere else in the world," Mr. Zavgayev said, adding that "if people voted several times they were themselves to blame."

"This does not cast doubt on the election of the republican leader," he insisted.

Under the electoral law implemented by the Moscow-installed government in the devastated capital Grozny, voters were allowed to cast their ballots in any polling station after showing an identity document.

There was no system to prevent multiple voting.

The Electoral Commission did not explain how it calculated the total number of voters in Chechenya after a year of war in which an estimated 25,000 have died and thousands have been made homeless.

On Monday, Russian

Interior Minister Anatoly Kulikov said Moscow could no longer negotiate with the separatists and that Mr. Zavgayev himself should carry out negotiations with the separatists.

Talks between Moscow and the rebels were suspended in October after an assassination attempt which critically wounded General Anatoly Romanov, the former Russian military commander in Chechenya.

Mr. Zavgayev said Tuesday his government was "ready to talk to those who understand that in Chechenya peace is the only solution."

Meanwhile, the federal command of Russian troops in Chechenya denied an earlier statement by military Commander Anatoly Shkirko that 267 civilians were killed during 10 days of fighting in Gudermes.

A statement from the federal command's press service said the general "never spoke of" such a death toll in Chechenya's second biggest town, 30 kilometres

east of the capital Grozny.

Local, Russian-installed Chechen officials were compiling a final toll, the statement said.

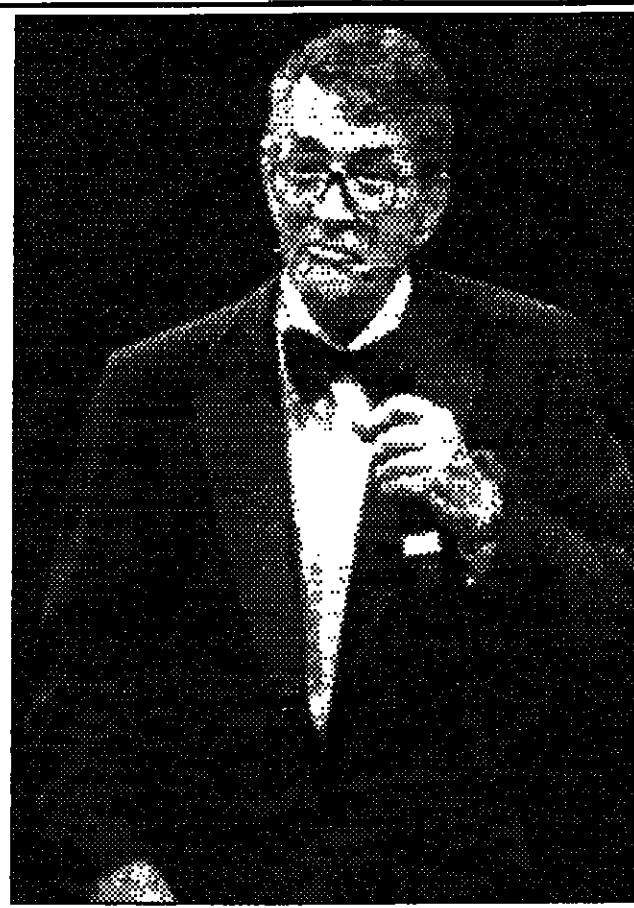
Gen. Shkirko also said 300 Chechen rebels were killed and 400 injured, while an aide to top Chechen guerrilla Commander Aslan Maskhadov told AFP in Grozny that 700 Russian soldiers had been killed and up to 40 armoured vehicles destroyed in Gudermes.

Both sides regularly exaggerate the losses of their opponents following battles.

Russian forces regained control of Gudermes Monday, after some of the worst fighting seen since a shaky ceasefire came into force at the end of June.

Residents of Gudermes fleeing the violence spoke of at least a hundred civilians killed.

Russian forces stepped in after the rebels launched a surprise assault on the town to coincide with the elections.



Dean Martin during performance in 1988 (AFP photo)  
**Dean Martin dies at 78**

LOS ANGELES (AFP) — Veteran U.S. actor, singer and comedian Dean Martin died at his home Monday of acute respiratory failure, his agent Mort Viner said. He was 78.

Martin was perhaps best known as the straight man in the Martin and Lewis comedy team he starred in for years with Jerry Lewis.

Martin ended that act after 10 years in 1956 and later said that meeting and leaving Lewis were the two major turning points in his career.

"I became a real actor because of those two things," he said.

Born Dino Paul Crocetti in 1917 to an Ohio barber, Martin dropped out of high school after the 10th grade and worked at various odd jobs — including as a gas station attendant and boxer.

He first used the name by which he became famous in 1941 while singing with the Sammy Watkins Band in Cleveland, Ohio.

Martin served briefly in the Army but was discharged with a hernia in 1945. The next year he met Lewis while both were performing in Atlantic City, and the pair soon launched their double act.

Martin made his film debut in 1949 in "My Friend Irma." He made a television debut in 1950 with Lewis, with whom he worked until 1956.

His first solo film after

breaking with Lewis, "Ten Thousand Bedrooms," was a dismal flop. But subsequent films, such as "The Young Lions" with Montgomery Clift and "Marlon Brando," established him as a star in

his own right.

Martin went on to host a solo television programme, "The Dean Martin Show," which drew high ratings for its unrehearsed, spontaneous style for most of its eight years on the air from 1965-73.

He was a regular member of the notorious Hollywood "rat pack," a star-studded social club that featured such luminaries as Frank Sinatra, Sammy Davis Jr., and Peter Lawford.

Martin's first television series was followed by "The Dean Martin Comedy Hour," which aired from 1973-74. He subsequently made a series of special television appearances.

The smooth on-screen ladies' man was also a popular singing talent, with the notable hit recordings "Memories Are Made Of This" and "Return To Me."

Martin also delivered solid performances in Howard Hawks' "Rio Bravo" (1958), Vincente Minnelli's "Some Came Running" (1958), Billy Wilder's "Kiss Me, Stupid" (1964), and Minnelli's "Bells Are Ringing" (1960) — a role said to be tailor-made for the dark-haired crooner.

Martin also played a caricatured and Americanised version of a James Bond-type character in the Matt Helm movies of the late 1960s.

His only son, actor and pop singer Dean Paul Martin, died in a plane crash in 1987 when his jet crashed near the California Air Force base where he served as a National Guard captain.

## Cambodia prepares offensive against Khmer Rouge

BATTAMBANG, Cambodia, (AFP) — Government

troops preparing for an expected large-scale offensive against Khmer Rouge guerrillas near this northwest provincial capital said Tuesday they face severe shortages of food, medicine, ammunition and other supplies.

"We do not have enough artillery and we need more ammunition to fight the Khmer Rouge," said Sok Phol, the deputy commander in charge of logistics for Military Region Five, which includes Battambang, Banteay Meanchey and Pursat provinces. Seven new T-55 tanks have been delivered to battalions on the outskirts of Battambang town, but insufficient fuel has arrived to use the tanks, according to one tank commander.

Five kilometres from the government's front-line position at the hamlet of Treng, located about 43 kilometres southwest of Battambang town, one company commander said all of his men were suffering from malaria, but had no protective mosquito nets or medicine to treat the disease.

Nevertheless, the government is expected soon to launch its annual dry-season offensive against the rebels as roads and the terrain dry out enough to allow passage of heavy

equipment.

Military analysts and others familiar with the government's plans expect the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces (RCAF) to begin its offensive by the end of January and push towards the Khmer Rouge economic stronghold of Pailin near the Thai border.

"The build-up for an offensive has definitely begun, but whether the RCAF will be adequately supplied is always unknown," said one analyst. "They have had these problems in the past, but we're aware of concerted efforts to fix them."

As of Tuesday, however, the situation did not appear to have changed. "We are lacking many things," Sok Phol said, noting that many of the 26,000 troops in his region are often receiving only a fifth of normal rice rations. Aid workers in Battambang say they regularly hear stories of soldiers selling their uniforms to villagers to buy food, and commanders acknowledge that they will have difficulties unless the situation is remedied.

"Unless we get more supplies soon, we will not be able to go for Pailin," said one battalion commander.

## Ban on Japan cult delayed until mid-1996

TOKYO (AFP) — A long-expected ban on the Aum Supreme Truth Sect, accused of the deadly gas attack on the Tokyo subway, is not likely to start until mid-1996 thanks to official laxity in a country seen as a paradise for sects, Japanese experts say.

A verdict by the Tokyo Appeal Court last week opened the way for legal procedures to strip the sect of its legal status as a religious organisation, but the cult will be able to drag out its existence as a private group for a few more months.

The Tokyo High Court rejected Aum's appeal against the move, which will also liquidate cult assets. Its publically declared funds alone are estimated at two billion yen (\$20 million).

The doomsday cult was designated an official religious organisation in 1989, collecting the tax breaks and privileges that status confers.

But even if the sect loses its status, the followers of Aum guru Shoko Asahara could keep meeting and performing their rites. Asahara, awaiting trial for murder since May 16, is being detained by Tokyo police.

On Tuesday, Aum top physician Ikuro Hayashi, 48, pleaded guilty to charges of confining followers and several other top Aum leaders have already pleaded guilty of releasing Sarin gas in the subway on March 20.

The real moves for banning Aum are to begin only on Jan. 18 when the Public Security Investigation Agency under the Ministry of Justice will hold its first hearing to consider hitting the cult with a 1952 anti-subversion law never before used against an organisation.

By March, the agency is expected to formally ask another Justice Ministry organ, the Public Security Examination Commission, to take a final decision, although such any banning is not expected before the summer, Japanese media reports say.

Police and courts have been roundly criticised for not acting sooner against a sect with a cache of chemical products and other materials which gave ample indication of the danger it posed to society.

"The sect should have been banned a long time ago," says Professor Sadao Asami, an expert on religions at Sendai Tohoku Gakuin University.

"For a long time, the police did nothing. They only began reacting after irreparable damage had already been committed. They have appeared weak and timid," Prof. Asami told AFP.

The Aum affair has exposed the impotence of the government and the judiciary faced with a major social crisis in a country where anything connected with religion was considered off-limits, he said.

On Dec. 8, the Japanese parliament adopted, after a furious debate, a law that compels religious organisations to shed some of their secrecy and publish their accounts.

In theory the law should make it easier to monitor sects' sources and use of funds.

However, a ban on a sect would be the first since World War II in a country home to some 180,000 recognised groups, some extremely rich and influential.

## Boom in Nicaragua as women go without birth control

MANAGUA (AFP) — Nicaragua has one of the world's fastest-growing populations, 3.7 per cent annually, as at least 53 per cent of women of childbearing age use no family planning method, a U.N. report released Monday found. The U.N. Population Fund report said the lack of access to health care services, fear and Roman Catholic religious teachings were factors influencing the grim family planning situation. The overwhelming majority of Nicaraguans belong to the Roman Catholic Church which opposes use of contraceptives. With its soaring growth rate, Nicaragua's maternal death rate in childbirth is seven per 1,000 live births, and its infant mortality rate 52 per 1,000 live births. At least 21 per cent of all births are to mothers younger than 18, according to Nicaraguan Health Ministry data. Back in 1990, officials found that only 25 per cent of childbearing-aged women were using any family planning method, earning it status as a priority country for U.N. Population Fund assistance which set up permanent offices here three years ago.

## Standard China 'no threat to dialects'

BEIJING (AFP) — Chinese Vice Premier, Li Lanqing has denied that the government's efforts to standardise spoken and written Chinese aim to eliminate the country's many dialects. "To disseminate standard Chinese is not to ban dialects, but their use should be restricted somewhat," Li was quoted as saying by the China Daily Tuesday. The Communist government began to popularise "putonghua" or "common speech" in 1955 together with simplified forms of Chinese characters to increase literacy and improve communications between areas with mutually unintelligible dialects. The policy was largely successful, but in the last 15 years China's open-door policy has seen the old system of characters making a comeback, especially with the increasing economic influence of Hong Kong and Taiwan, where the old system is still used. Mr. Li stressed that all publications, trademarks, advertisements and identity cards must use standardised characters.

## Tonya Harding weds

WASHINGTON (AFP) — Don't ask where disgraced Olympic skater Tonya Harding is honeymooning, "Do you think I'm stupid," the skater responded when asked where she and new hubby Michael Smith would spend their post-nuptial holiday. Harding, booted for life from figure-skating competition for her role in a knee-slammng attack on colleague Nancy Kerrigan, was married Saturday aboard a yacht on a river in Portland, Oregon. It was the fourth marriage for Smith, a 29-year-old machinist. "I'm very happy, and I hope to keep it that way," Harding said.

## Prince to part ways with Warner Bros.

WASHINGTON (AFP) — He's called the Artist Formerly Known as Prince, but he'd like to be called the Man Who Formerly Recorded Under the Warner Bros. Label. The pop star cited "irreconcilable differences" with the company in a statement last week. "The unstable and ever-changing management structure (at Warner) has made it impossible for the company to effectively market and promote its flagship artists," he said.

## Emergency crews search for last 2 bodies from crash of U.S. airliner

BOGOTA (AFP) — Three of the four survivors of last week's American Airlines crash in Colombia were upgraded from critical to serious but stable condition Monday as crews searched for two remaining bodies.

Doctor Luis Fernando Castro at Cali University Hospital said two men and a nine-year-old girl were moved out of the intensive care unit, where the fourth survivor, a 21-year-old woman remained despite slow improvement in her condition.

The Boeing 757 passenger plane from Miami, Florida slammed into an Andean Mountain while attempting to land in Cali after it apparently strayed from its flight path.

Separately Monday, a U.S. newspaper attributed the accident to human error.

Unnamed sources told The Washington Post that mistakes made by the pilots or air traffic controllers, or both, caused the crash in which 160 people perished.

Colombian and U.S. technicians inspecting the flight data recorder in Washington told the newspaper they believed human error caused the accident but said it would take months to reach a final conclusion.

"What we clearly have is an operational accident," one source familiar with the investigation said.

Experts at the Washington-based National Transportation Safety Board were deciphering data contained in the flight recorder and were to begin Tuesday piecing together a detailed transcript of all communication between the pilots and the controllers.

The newspaper report said analysts had

ruled out sabotage or mechanical trouble as the cause of the accident.

On the steep and cold mountainside, workers from the Red Cross, civil defence and Colombian police pressed their final push to find the remains the two people whose remains had not yet been located.

The soldiers began in the early hours Monday to "remove earth and debris, and everything else they come across in that sector in order to locate the four bodies that remain at the site of this fatal accident," Radio Caracol said earlier.

The clean-up operation, still inching forward after five days of battling with rough weather and terrain, was coordinated from the southeastern Colombian town of San Jose, located near Buga where the plane crashed just four in-flight minutes before it was scheduled to land in Cali.

Most of the 16 passengers on Flight 965 were Colombians returning home for Christmas.

Sources quoted by the Post said mistakes were made as the plane drifted down a dark valley between high mountains in its attempt to land.

There could have been miscommunication between the U.S. crew and Colombian air traffic controllers because of language problems, the report said.

All traffic control communications are supposed to be in English but previous crashes have resulted from language troubles.

American Airlines Saturday warned its pilots not to accept clearances not on their flight plans, the report said.

## Bangladesh opposition sets rallies ahead of strike

DHAKA (R) — Opposition parties continuing a long campaign to oust Prime Minister Khaleda Zia launched a new wave of rallies across Bangladesh Tuesday ahead of general elections scheduled for February.

Opposition officials said the campaign would culminate in a countrywide transport shutdown Saturday ahead of a 48-hour national strike starting on Jan. 3, the last date for registration of election candidates.

The strike is intended to frustrate attempts by nominees of the ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) and a few fringe opposition groups to register for the Feb. 7 polls.

Major opposition groups, led by the Awami League of Sheikh Hasina, have refused to participate unless Mrs. Khaleda quits to allow a neutral caretaker administration to take charge.

The opposition accuses Mrs. Khaleda's BNP of rigging a 1994 by-election and says general elections with her still in power will not be free and fair.

They also accuse her of running a corrupt administration and have campaigned for more than a year to oust her. Almost all opposition members quit parliament a year ago in pursuit of their demand for a neutral administration.

Mrs. Khaleda, who denies the opposition charges, has rejected the demand that she quit as unconstitutional. Frequent attempts at mediation have failed.

Opposition officials said the latest effort, driven by U.S. Ambassador David Merrill, had yielded no "tangible result."

"The diplomat never did propose any formula. Rather he was keen to see that the two sides reached a peaceful solution," Awami Leader Amir Hossain Amu told the Independent newspaper.

Mr. Merrill was present at one of the meetings Mr. Amu had with BNP leaders Shamsul Islam and Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan at the weekend, the first direct talks between rival leaders in more than a year.

"There was no pressure from the diplomat, they are interested to know how far we have proceeded towards a solution," Mr. Amu said.

"They are keen to see that the election is fully contested and that political stability remains in the interest of economic development."

## Burmese junta cracking down on political prisoners — opposition

BANGKOK (AFP) — Burma's military rulers have cracked down on political prisoners in an effort to identify the source of reports on prison conditions, an opposition group charged Tuesday.

The "All Burma Students' Democratic Front (ABSDF)" said the junta had begun "a very brutal investigation" to find the source of letters from political prisoners sent clandestinely to U.N. official Yozo Yokota.

The letters were sent to Mr. Yokota, the U.N. rapporteur on human rights, for his report on the human rights situation in Burma.

The ABSDF statement alleged that prisoners had been denied water and food during interrogation periods

since mid-November and had been forced to sleep on concrete without mats or blankets.

Permission to meet the detainees at Insein Prison had been refused since mid-November, the statement said, adding that prisoners under interrogation had been kept in "military dog cells."

The junta "would like to find out which prisoners wrote the letters and who helped them to send the letters out of the prison," the ABSDF said.

It held that conditions at Insein Prison were "very bad" and that some prisoners were seriously ill.

According to the ABSDF, the junta planned to "crush the supporters" of opposi-

tion leader Aung San Suu Kyi before moving against her personally.

The junta "is aware of the public relations boost the release of Ms. Suu Kyi has given them, and they will not throw this away by re-arresting her immediately," the statement said.

"Instead they will cut off her support base and try to marginalise her" by harassing and arresting her supporters as a first step, it added.

Aung San Suu Kyi was released in July from nearly six years of house arrest. She has been allowed to circulate and address supporters, but recently military authorities have arrested people linked to her.

## Indian police raid Golden Temple in search of Sikh leader's assassin

NEW DELHI, (AFP) — Indian police stormed the Golden Temple in the Sikh holy city of Amritsar in an overnight raid to flush out the alleged killer of a top Sikh politician, officials said Tuesday.

The raid on the Sikh religion's holiest shrine was the first major police action there since May 1988 when army commandos shot dead 36 Sikh separatists in a 11-day siege of the complex.

Officials in Amritsar said police entered the Golden Temple in an attempt to

capture the alleged mastermind of the Aug. 31 assassination of Beant Singh, the Sikh chief minister of the northern state of Punjab.

But city police chief S.S. Chana said no arrests were made after a search of the white marble shrine. The raid came three days after three Sikh separatists were arrested in Punjab for plotting to kill Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao.

Police said two of the "hardcore terrorists" arrested Friday were also involved in the slaying of

Beant Singh, credited with stamping out Sikh militancy through a relentless drive in the state.

The police say the three suspects were involved in a "Pakistani-aided conspiracy" to assassinate Mr. Rao and the chief minister of adjoining Haryana state, Bhajan Lal.

One of the three suspects, Jagtar Singh Hawara, reportedly told officials their ringleader was staying in the Golden Temple, police said.

## School fire sparks safety concerns in India

NEW DELHI (AFP) — A blaze which killed more than 400 people at a school party in northern India has sparked concerns about violations of fire safety regulations across the country.

The authorities said they would draw up stricter rules to prevent a repeat of Saturday's disaster at Dabwali. The government of Haryana state, which includes the town, has banned unregulated public functions.

"We should learn a lesson from Dabwali," New Delhi region Health Minister Harsh Vardhan said.

A blazing canopy fell on 2,000 people at an end of year school party in Dabwali, 280 kilometres from New Delhi, sparking a stampede for the single exit.

Some 420 people, mostly children and women, were killed and 600 people were injured. Rescue workers and hospital officials say the death toll may be as high as 600 but the actual figure may never be known.

The fire spread after a spark ignited nylon sheets over the walled auditorium, which was packed with parents and children at the prize-giving for the local Dayanand Arya Vedic school.

Police blamed the fire on an electrical short-circuit and said a number of cooking gas cylinders may have exploded from the heat.

Dozens of children's bodies were charred beyond recognition leading to confusion at hospitals where corpses were brought for identification.

Dabwali authorities have appealed to residents to come forward and help draw up a list of the missing from what has been described as India's worst fire.

Haryana Chief Minister Bhajan Lal said banquet halls in the state must have four exit points and banned the use of inflammable material or decorations at public functions.

A Haryana administration official said other measures were being worked out to prevent future disasters.

"Every function will now have to be cleared first by the fire brigade," a Haryana government spokesman said.

Residents of Dabwali angrily accused the town administration over letting the school to use an unsafe commercial hall for the party.

Newspapers Tuesday warned that disregard for human life and lack of penal action to curb fire-safety violations could lead to more disasters.

"Such gross neglect of safety is not confined to makeshift venues and can be observed in office buildings, high-rise apartment blocks, cinema theatres and shopping complexes," The Times of India said.

The apathy is so widespread and all-pervasive that it is a wonder that tragedies like Dabwali ... do not occur more frequently," it added.

The Pioneer said lax enforcement of rules encourages sponsors of public functions, weddings and religious events to flout fire-safety measures. It called for a streamlining of norms to prevent disasters.

The government must "concertise measures that need to be taken if such accidents are not to recur with the frequency that they do in this country," the newspaper said.

The government said it would consider new laws on the use of inflammable materials, curtains and tents and forge policies regulating and monitoring public functions.

## North releases South Korean fishermen; rice aid may resume

PANMUNJOM, Korea (AFP) — North Korea Tuesday released the five surviving crew of a South Korean fishing trawler detained seven months ago, raising expectations that emergency rice aid could resume to alleviate the North's food crisis.

The remains of three other crew were also released by the North Korean authorities. Two were killed in gunfire during the capture of their vessel, the Usong-86, by the North Korean Navy on May 30. The other died while being held by the Communist North.

The five crew of the trawler that strayed into North Korean waters returned to South Korea through the truce village of Panmunjom on the demilitarised zone that divides the two Koreas.

At 0700 GMT, the five wearing overcoats, ties and scarves and carrying identical new grey suitcases walked towards the military demarcation line (MDL), escorted by North Koreans in military and civilian clothing.

As they stepped across the MDL, they turned to face their former captors and called out, waving, "Thank you, we cannot forget your hospitality."

They were followed by three boxes of ashes wrapped in white clothes

which were handed to three representatives of Red Cross waiting on the south side of Panmunjom.

One of the surviving crew, Park Jae-Ryol, 44, replied "No" when asked by journalists if they were harassed in the North.

"We were cared for very well," he said, adding they had been housed in an inn.

The group then rushed to National Unification Board Headquarters inside the demilitarised zone dividing Korea, where relatives of the three dead wept uncontrollably over makeshift stands where the remains were laid.

The survivors were hurried through medical checks, and allowed a few minutes with relatives before being whisked away by a bus for a lengthy debriefing on their time in the North.

The repatriation was the first friendly gesture by North Korea toward the South since rice talks between the two sides broke down in September over the capture, which occurred on May 30.

At the time of the breakdown, the fate of the 86-Usong crew was high on the agenda. Seoul had hoped for their return after it shipped 150,000 tonnes of rice free to Pyongyang to help the isolated Stalinist state overcome a food shortage.

The North called the trawler's capture by its navy the result of an illegal intrusion.

Since the collapse of the rice talks, relations between the two Koreas have been tense with the South saying Pyongyang has moved military units including planes closer to the demilitarised zone.

In a move seen here as a signal indicating that it wants rice aid resumed, North Korea faxed a notice about the repatriation to Lee Suk-Chae, currently telecommunication minister, who led South Koreans at the Beijing rice talks.

North Korea, which reportedly faces a serious famine this winter, has arranged emergency rice deals with South Korea and Japan.

Meanwhile North Korean leader Kim Jong-Il made his first public appearance in more than a month at a performance by a Korean People's Army Concert Troupe choir Sunday, monitors said Tuesday.

Mr. Kim also took part in a photo session Monday with staff and activists from the Kang Kon Military Academy and the Kim Il-Sung Political University on the 50th anniversary of the university's founding, according to a Pyongyang radio report monitored by the South Korean monitor-

ing agency Nacwae Press.

Sunday's public appearance, Mr. Kim's first since Nov. 18, coincided with celebrations marking the fourth anniversary of his election to the commander of the isolated country's 1.1 million-strong armed forces.

On Monday, the 53-year-old son and heir of the late Kim Il-Sung, who died last year, called for a "powerful" ideological drive against "counter-revolutionary plots and traitorous acts."

In a lengthy discourse carried Monday by the Communist Party newspaper Rodong Shinmun, the junior Kim called for the movement to block what he called the penetration of "our ranks by 'obscure and reactionary morality and moral life'."

The speech, carried by the official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA), urged unqualified respect for and allegiance to his late father, and warned against any attempt by renegades to vilify revolutionary leaders.

The motives behind the ideological campaign appeared unclear, but a monitor in Tokyo said it had "strong connotations" of an intention to enforce internal discipline at a time of reported severe food shortages.

## 'Diana's future role depends on marriage decisions'

LONDON (AFP) — Foreign Secretary Malcolm Rifkind said Tuesday that Princess Diana's wish to become a roving ambassador for Britain could only be broached once the question of her divorce from the Prince of Wales had been resolved.

"I think we are at a very delicate moment with regard to the future of the prince and princess," Mr. Rifkind told the BBC in an interview. "I think (the princess' future role) very much depends on the decisions they themselves take with regard to their future."

"Ambassador has both a technical meaning but it also has a more general meaning that is sometimes used of someone who helps advance the interests of the country they belong to," Mr. Rifkind said.

In an interview last month princess Diana said she saw her future role as a goodwill envoy for Britain, despite being separated from her husband — Britain's future monarch — and her increasingly strained relations with

the royal family. He was the first government minister to comment on a possible diplomatic role for the Princess of Wales.

Mr. Rifkind did not comment on the princess' ability to advance British interests, although other cabinet ministers and MPs have already expressed reservations.

Princess Diana's candid interview with the BBC on Nov. 20, in which she admitted committing adultery, triggered fresh speculation over the royal troubled marriage. The controversy resurfaced again last week when Queen Elizabeth II suggested the couple divorce.

Meanwhile Two leading Anglican clerics Monday entered the fray around the Prince of Wales, saying that it was not the church's role to tell him who he could or could not have a personal relationship with.

The Dean of Winchester Cathedral, Trevor Beeson, and Lord Cogan, a former Archbishop of Canterbury,

criticised statements made at the weekend by several of their colleagues, who said that after any divorce from Princess Diana, the Prince should not be seen with his mistress, Camilla Parker Bowles.

"It is for nobody else to tell him who he should have relationships with," said the Reverend Beeson, speaking to local journalists.

"It is not for interfering churchmen to tell him who he should have relationships with. It would be impertinent."

He specified however that he was only referring to the present situation, and not suggesting what would be correct if and when Prince Charles succeeded his mother as monarch.

"I think there has been so much talking about this on very inadequate information which is in no way reliable," said Lord Cogan.

"The less we talk and the more we pray the better."

The two churchmen were reacting to statements made to Sunday newspapers by three other Church of

England clerics.

One of them, Alwyn Rice Jones, the Archbishop of Wales said: "If Mrs. Parker Bowles appears in public with the prince after his divorce, she would be taking the part of his consort and I don't think the people would wish to be involved in that arrangement."

Archdeacon of Blackburn, the Venerable David Robinson added: "Irrespective of whether it is a prince or pauper, that sort of relationship outside marriage is absolutely against the teachings of the Church."

And the Dean of St Paul's, the Very Reverend Eric Evans, affirmed: "If the present Princess of Wales were to die then, of course, he would be free to remarry. But there are no other circumstances in which he could continue his relationship with Camilla Parker Bowles."

## 47 killed, 53 missing in S. African floods

DURBAN, South Africa (R) — At least 47 people were killed and 53 reported missing and feared dead in floods caused by heavy rains in South Africa's volatile KwaZulu-Natal province, police said Tuesday.

"We have picked up 47 bodies so far among the 100 reported missing, we fear they are all dead, we fear the figure could reach 100 by late this afternoon,"

police spokesman Henry Budhrum told Reuters.

KwaZulu-Natal is also scene of bitter interethnic fighting between Nelson Mandela's ruling African National Congress (ANC) and Chief Mangosuthu Buthe's Inkatha Freedom Party.

Mr. Budhrum told reporters the victims of floods all lived in Edendale, black township outside Pietermaritzburg, many

shacks were swept away when a river running through the township flooded Sunday and Monday night.

He said many bodies had been found washed down the Umzindusi River and police were searching the river banks for more victims.

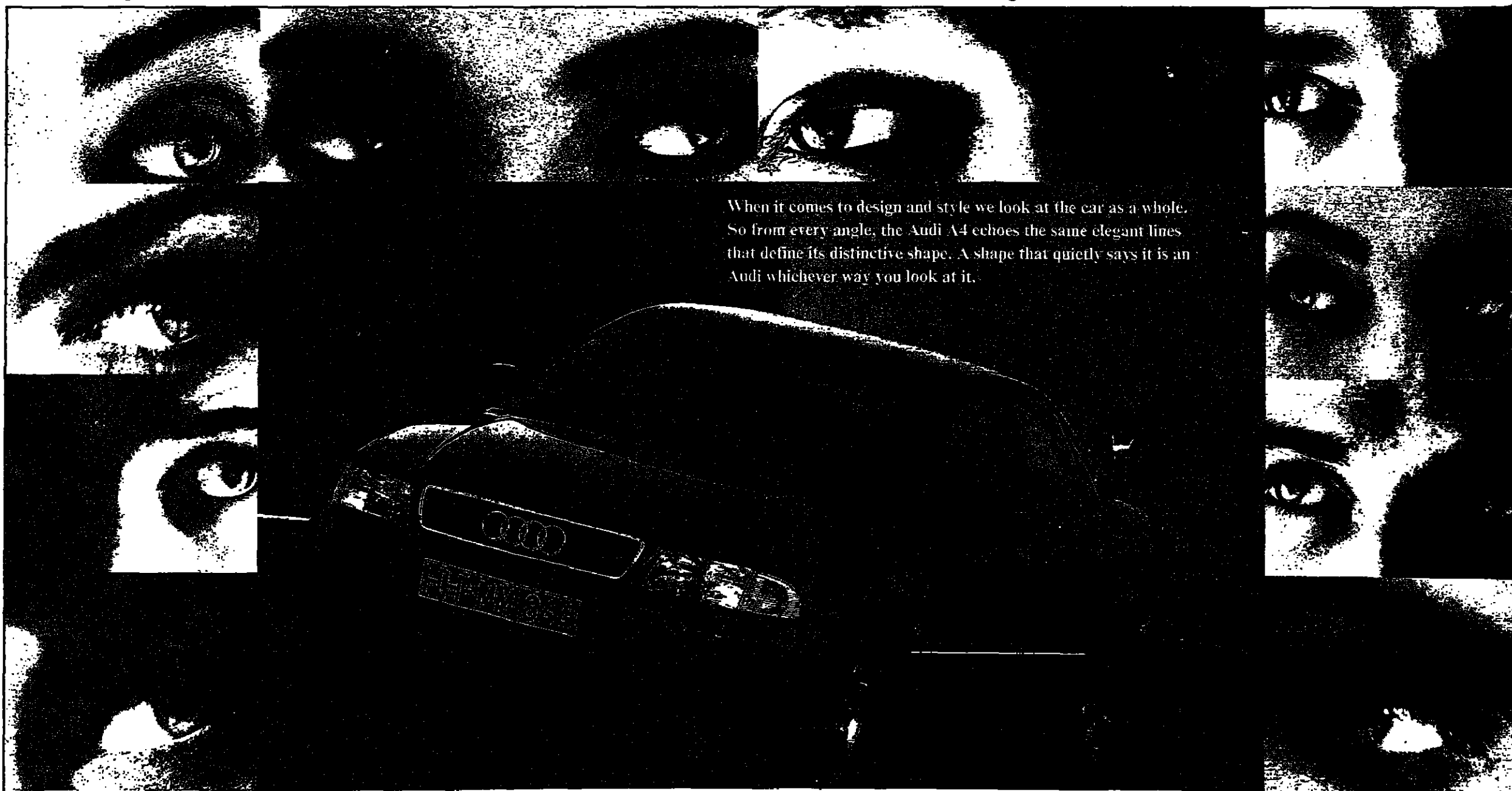
Mr. Budhrum said the death toll could be as high as 100 because small tributaries feeding the

Umzindusi River had also come down in flood washing away homes on their banks.

"Many homes have been damaged and destroyed, there is a police helicopter assisting in the search for more bodies. The terrain was inaccessible and the search was being hampered by flood damage," he said.

"Everything possible is being done to help the survivors of the floods."

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## Putting goodwill into action

**STATEMENTS MADE** by His Majesty King Hussein and Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak yesterday on the two leaders' stand regarding the future of Iraq put to rest all speculations that the two countries were competing for influence in that country. Jordan and Egypt have only two interests in this regard: To see an end to the suffering of the Iraqi people and to ensure that Iraq's unity is kept intact. Furthermore, the two countries cannot decide on the future of Iraq, and think only Iraqis should do that.

However, King Hussein has repeatedly warned that the status quo, if it is to prevail longer, would ultimately result in a division of that brotherly country. Any such calamity would have far-reaching consequences on the Arab Nation, especially on its eastern flank. The recent presidential election in Iraq that mainly took place in the central regions of the country is a dangerous signal that should not be overlooked.

While the situation that led to the status quo was the result of the joint actions of the current Iraqi regime and Western powers, especially the U.S., the future of Iraq should most appropriately be decided by the Iraqi people with the help of their Arab brothers. That is why Mr. Mubarak's visit yesterday assumes an added importance.

Egypt was one of the Arab countries that played a major role in driving the Iraqi forces out of Kuwait in 1991. Egypt, therefore, is in a position to influence the other Arab partners, especially Saudi Arabia and Syria, as well as the West. The Egyptian commitment to safeguarding the unity of Iraq and to ending the plight of the Iraqi people needs to be translated into quick action because the unity of Iraq is in serious threat and the Iraqi people themselves are in need of any help they can get.

## ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

AL RA'I Arabic daily said in its editorial Tuesday this year's Christmas celebrations in the liberated city of Bethlehem give signs of a better future for the region. The paper said this year's celebrations were filled with the long-awaited joy for Bethlehem, the birthplace of the prophet of peace. The Christmas mass which lit up the dark night of the city after the withdrawal of Israeli occupation forces filled the hearts of believers all over the world with exultation and jubilation, the paper noted. It said at a time when Christians were praying, His Majesty King Hussein, the peace-maker, was sending his best wishes for celebrators and was imploring the almighty God that peace would prevail in the region in particular, and the world in general. "This year's Christmas celebrations which coincided with the blowing winds of freedom on the Arab Palestinian people on its national soil, give the promise of a better future on the map of developing political, economic and social relations between the region's peoples," said the paper. It concluded: "Let the rings of bells this year be a sign of the completion of the journey of peace on the land of peace and in the whole region."

AL DUSTOUR's editorial Tuesday dealt with the Syrian-Israeli peace negotiations which will start in the U.S. on Wednesday. It said the negotiations will take place in an atmosphere calling for optimism in view of the positive statements issued by the two sides and affirmations by the U.S. on the seriousness of these negotiations. These negotiations which will be held under the auspices of the U.S. acquire extreme importance since they constitute the first round of talks between the two sides after a recess period of five months, which witnessed great developments, including the assassination of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, the newspaper said. It added that it hoped that the resumption of negotiations on the occupied Golan Heights would become a victory for the option of peace, which was earlier the choice of the Jordanians and Palestinians, and would be a proof that negotiations are the only realistic option available for the Arabs to regain their legitimate rights.

## Washington Watch

# The anti-terrorism bill revisited

By Dr. James Zogby

FOR THE third time in as many years, the effort to pass an anti-terrorism bill has stalled in Congress. A broad coalition of legal, ethnic, and religious organisations have come together to oppose this legislation. Their opposition is based on the fear that the proposed bill will violate a wide range of civil liberties guaranteed by the U.S. constitution, and will provide for the potentially abusive expansion of law enforcement.

The 1995 version of the anti-terrorism legislation was initially introduced by the Clinton administration as a part of its effort to counter what they described as domestic U.S. support for foreign terrorist activities. The administration's bill included proposals to: ban all U.S. fundraising for groups defined by the president as "terrorist"; deny visas to individuals identified with any such "terrorist" group; and allow for the use of secret evidence in extradition trials of individuals accused of membership in those organisations.

It was initially assumed that the administration's proposal would be accepted by the Republican-led Senate and Congress. Opponents of the bill, including Arab Americans, lobbied hard, receiving significant media attention for their complaint that the measures would violate constitutional protections. American Jewish groups, on the other hand, lobbied equally hard in favour of the bill, arguing that it was necessary to stop terrorism, specifically Islamic and Arab terrorism, from finding support in the United States.

But the bill had lost momentum until the April 19 bombing in Oklahoma City added new urgency to the legislation and new cause for the administration and Congress to seek an expansion of law enforcement authority even beyond what the provisions in the original bill enhancing the power of law enforcement agencies to conduct wiretaps and investigations into the activities of "suspicious groups" and reducing the criteria needed to begin such an investigation.

Given the national trauma in the wake of the Oklahoma City bombing, it was assumed that the expanded bill would easily pass both houses of Congress. But it was at this time that the civil liberties lobby that traditionally influenced liberal members of Con-

gress found new and unexpected allies among conservatives. Angered by the behaviour of federal law enforcement agencies in two recent incidents, conservatives were wary of taking steps to expand the role of the government into the private affairs of citizens.

Public hearings were called in Congress to examine the role of law enforcement agencies at both Ruby Ridge, Idaho, where federal officers in what some saw as an unprovoked attack killed the wife and son of a right-wing extremist; and the tragic events outside of Waco, Texas where law enforcement agencies were once again criticised for the role they played in the deaths of scores of followers of the cult leader David Koresh.

As a result of this new concern among conservatives, the coalition opposing the anti-terrorism legislation grew. To the organisational muscle of the liberal civil liberties groups was added the apparatus of such powerful conservative organisations as the National Rifle Association, Gun Owners of America, and the Law Enforcement Alliance of America.

The Senate ultimately did pass the bill, but with some significant modifications. While some civil liberties groups were not satisfied with the revised bill did provide some additional protections not found in the original. It was in the House of Representatives that the bill stalled. A group of 50 conservative Republicans balked at the legislation and refused to accept either the administration's or the Senate's revised version. Even when a compromise was proposed which would have deleted the enhanced wiretap provisions, deleted funding for additional FBI personnel, deleted the provision to allow military involvement in civilian law enforcement and deleted the overly broad definition of terrorism, the conservative alliance still refused to support it. And so coalition of liberals and conservatives in the Congress have all but ended the possibility of passing an anti-terrorism bill in 1995.

The Republican leadership in Congress and the Democratic administration are both pledging to renew their efforts to secure passage of an anti-terrorism bill in 1996, because both sides fear that the failure to pass such a bill will be used as a campaign issue. But while "anti-terror-

ism" remains an emotional issue, it has not dissuaded both liberals and conservatives participating in the coalition from insisting that any legislation be precise, and not allow law enforcement agencies to overstep their bounds.

During a recent press conference sponsored by the American Civil Liberties Union (the group that has led the effort against the anti-terrorism legislation), I made clear our community's continuing opposition to the legislation. I based my case on a number of issues:

**"By the FBI count, since 1982 there have been 175 incidents of domestic terrorism. Of that number, 77 have been committed by Puerto Rican nationalist groups, 23 by left wing groups, and 12 by anti-Castro Cuban organisations. Eighteen acts were committed by 'Jewish extremists' and 31 by animal rights and environmental groups. In the past 14 years there have been only three domestic terrorism incidents attributed to Arabs or Muslims."**

First, the legislation is not necessary. In fact, to listen to other national outcries about terrorism in the U.S., one might conclude that the problem was of epidemic proportion. The FBI's own statistics prove the contrary to be true. During the 1970s, there were dozens of domestic acts of terrorism committed each year. Even in the early 1980s when the FBI began to officially publish annual reports on domestic terrorism, the number of incidents averaged roughly 20 per year. In the past few years the number has been reduced to an average of three or four.

It is also significant to note that the major source of such domestic terrorism is not from Arab or Muslim groups as has been widely projected in the media. In fact, by the FBI's own count, since 1982 there have been overall approximately 175 incidents of domestic terrorism. Of that number, 77 have been committed by Puerto Rican nationalist groups, 23 by left-wing groups, and 12 by anti-Castro Cuban organisations. Eighteen acts were committed by what the FBI termed "Jewish extremists" and 31 by animal rights and environmental groups. By contrast, in the past 14 years there have been only three domestic terrorism incidents attributed to Arabs or Muslims.

Even a look at the State Department reports on anti-U.S. terrorist acts committed abroad shows that those originating in the Middle East by Arab or Islamic groups are among the fewest. For example, in 1994, 44 anti-U.S. terrorist acts occurred in Latin America, compared to eight in the Middle East; in 1993 the numbers were 68 in Latin America and eight in the Middle East.

Terrorism is an evil and it must be stopped. But it appears that U.S. law enforcement agencies already have the power to do the job and they are succeeding. It is unnecessary and wrong to suspend constitutionally guaranteed rights to take further steps.

In fact, the testimony of law enforcement experts was unanimous in stating that, as horrific as the Oklahoma City and World Trade Centre bombings were, there is nothing in even the most extreme versions of the proposed legislation that would have stopped either of these two hideous acts before they occurred. In the case of the group around Sheikh Omar Abdul Rahman, one must remember that the FBI did in fact have that group under surveillance and even had informants operating in its midst. The informant was the government's star witness in the case against Sheikh Omar, but neither he nor the FBI was able to stop the crime before it occurred.

The World Trade Centre case notwithstanding, to make Arabs and Muslims the targets of his legislation as some American Jewish groups and members of Congress have done is plainly wrong and not justified by the facts.

It is also unjustified to claim that the sections of

the proposed law that would ban fundraising for terrorist groups are necessary. It is already illegal in the U.S. to contribute materially to the commission of a crime. The current proposal seeks to ban support even of humanitarian organisations that are allegedly tied to terrorist groups. This is also unnecessary and wrong. First and foremost, it cannot be shown that any significant amounts of money flows from the U.S. to support such activities. Even added together, all the U.S. contributions to overseas Arab and Islamic humanitarian groups do not total \$10 million annually.

A problem that is not addressed in the proposed legislation or by politicians and the media is the funding that comes from Jewish individuals to support right wing extremist activity in Israel and the occupied territories. Research currently being conducted by a major U.S. newspaper will show that a single American Jewish philanthropist gives over \$5 million each year to support such extremist activities. And yet his efforts have not been subjected to law enforcement.

Finally, Arab Americans have experienced first-hand the dangers that visit a vulnerable community when their rights can be violated. Another major U.S. newspaper is currently researching just such violations of the rights of individuals involved in Arab student groups by the FBI during the 1980s. After reviewing the FBI documents (12 volumes of papers covering a ten-year investigation), the newspaper will report how the FBI monitored every social, religious and educational activity carried out by the Arab and Muslim student groups. After ten years and millions of dollars of resources wasted, the FBI suspended the investigations, deciding that the groups were benign and harmless.

Our concern, therefore, is that existing standards should not be expanded to allow more intrusive activity by law enforcement. The coalition that formed to oppose the anti-terrorism legislation remains committed to fighting efforts to further erode rights that are guaranteed in the constitution to everyone residing in the U.S.

For three years we have succeeded in staving off such efforts, but our resolve will be tested once more in 1996.

## Israel and Syria send positive signals, but can they make peace?

By Nicolas B. Tatro  
 The Associated Press

TEL AVIV — Israel has sent out a flurry of signals to Syria that it is ready and willing to deal. Syria has welcomed Israel's new flexibility.

But can the two sides actually deliver what would make that deal work? A complete Israeli withdrawal from the Golan Heights in exchange for open acceptance of Israel by the Arab World?

Some are not so sure. "Basically, we have a procedural breakthrough in negotiations, but it is not at all clear if the gaps are bridgeable," said Dore Gold, a political scientist at Tel Aviv University's Jaffee Centre for Strategic Studies.

In leaks to newspapers and via his aides, Prime Minister Shimon Peres has indicated that he is ready to declare publicly that he accepts Sy-

rian sovereignty in the Golan Heights, which Israel captured in a 1967 war.

His deputy defence minister, Ori Orr, let it be known that Israel is also willing to drop its insistence on leaving behind a monitoring post if Syria responds with a similar gesture such as pulling its troops far back from the border. This issue had locked up Israel-Syria talks for six months.

Israel is also prepared to meet Syrian demands for a stepped-up timetable on withdrawal. Aides suggest Mr. Peres would settle for two years. Some reports said it could be finished in a matter of months.

The new flexibility is also reflected in Mr. Peres' attitude towards how to conduct the talks.

Mr. Peres told a Knesset committee this week that his government and Syria have

settled on a framework for talks on any issue. Gone was Israel's insistence on direct, high-level talks without the Americans. Also gone was an overriding emphasis on security questions.

This represents a major shift away from the policy of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, who was assassinated Nov. 4. He was demanding complicated security measures to protect Israel from being double-crossed.

Syria's response to Mr. Peres has been upbeat.

Foreign Minister Farouk Al Sharaa said he believed Israel under Mr. Peres was more flexible than under Mr. Rabin, who led Israel's army when it captured the Golan Heights. He said he hoped the talks, to resume near Washington today, "will produce tangible results."

A key question is whether Mr. Assad is willing to pay

the price for ending his isolation from the United States and Europe. He would have to accept "the kind of far-reaching ties Israel wants — including hordes of Israeli tourists, live Israeli newscasts from Damascus and joint business deals run out of Tel Aviv."

That's a major leap for a regime that has refused any contact with the Jewish state.

And Mr. Peres will have to persuade a sceptical public that it will benefit from a full withdrawal.

Mr. Rabin held out hope for an Israeli embassy in Damascus and a quiet border with Lebanon. But his experience with Egypt, which made peace but hasn't developed strong ties, left Israelis doubtful about promises to normalise relations. And the absence of war on the Golan front for 20 years left them feeling little pres-

sure for change.

Mr. Peres, on the other hand, has evoked a grand vision: Leaders of Israel's Arab neighbours would support a Mideast peace with no more terrorism, no fighting in Lebanon and no fear of missile attacks.

"Who guarantees us that all these Arab leaders will agree to crown Assad their leader?" wrote commentator Yoel Marcus in the Haaretz newspaper.

Polls published Dec. 15 indicate an erosion in opposition.

In a survey reported by the Maariv newspaper, 35 per cent of 536 Israelis polled said they supported total withdrawal from the Golan in exchange for peace with Syria. Forty-six per cent said they were opposed. The margin of error was 4.5 percentage points.

## Deposed Qatari emir's Gulf tour pressures son

By Ashraf Fouad  
 Reuters

DUBAI — A Gulf tour by Qatar's deposed emir and vows to return to power are placing pressure on the son who ousted him in a bloodless palace coup, Gulf Arab officials said on Tuesday.

Former Emir Sheikh Khalifa Bin Hamad Al Thani is affirming his legitimacy and circumstances are helping him," said one official.

The circumstances in question are the boycott of the Gulf Cooperation Council's summit earlier this month by

the new emir Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al Thani.

The boycott, over the way the GCC's New Saudi Arabian secretary-general was chosen instead of a Qatari candidate, angered Qatar's five allies in the regional group.

Sheikh Khalifa returned to the Gulf from Europe last week for the first time since he has been deposed in June while he was in Switzerland.

Qatar's partners in the GCC were quick to recognise the new emir after the coup. Nevertheless the ousted emir has been greeted warmly by

leaders of the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain and told he would also be welcome in Kuwait.

He could also visit the other two members of the GCC, Oman and Saudi Arabia, diplomatic sources said, and he might go to Syria and Egypt, the GCC's Gulf war allies who in 1991 formed the eight-nation Damascus declaration, they said.

While in the UAE, an aide said the purpose of Sheikh Khalifa's Gulf tour was to affirm that "he has not and will not relinquish power under any circumstances and

he is returning to rule his dear country Qatar soon, God willing."

The aide did not say how the former emir planned to return to power, but Gulf experts discounted armed struggle.

"It could be bloody and these states do not like bloodshed. He has to consider a million things," one said.

Sheikh Khalifa has not indicated where he planned to live after he completed his tour but official sources said the UAE had welcomed him to stay.

Other sources said prepa-

rations were under way for the former emir to reside in eastern Saudi Arabia close to the Qatari border. They said some tribal supporters were already in the kingdom, the only state which has a land border with Qatar.

This could not be independently confirmed.

In Doha, a western diplomat told Reuters: "There is no growing discontent here with the current emir but no doubt the four places pressure on him."

Diplomats said most Qataris supported Doha in the dispute.

By Ali Kassay

# Klaxon clatter

"I was really looking forward to my siesta today," complained a dear friend of mine, as he drove, with me in the passenger seat, to pick up a third crouny and head towards a watering trough seeking refreshment. "But as soon as my head made contact with the pillows," he went on, "all the motorists in the Greater Amman Area, boosted by friends and relations from neighbouring towns and villages, appeared to congregate around my house, where they started tooting their car horns and seemed intent on doing so for the rest of their lives. The noise did not stop for a second. Such insensitivity is simply beyond comprehension. It is uncivilised."

This diatribe, which lasted the best part of the journey, and to which I listened with a sympathetic ear, came to a conclusion as we stopped the car at journey's end, whereupon my aggrieved friend pressed his hand on his car horn and kept it there until the third party to our team popped his head out through the window and signalled to us by frantic gesticulations that his baby was asleep, and that he was on his way down. I should mention that his was not the only head that popped at a window. Virtually all the neighbours had rushed to their respective windows to investigate the uproar.

Normative judgements aside, I always marvel at the ingenuity of Jordanians who have managed to devise so many imaginative uses for the measly car horn. In this case it was used rather like trumpets in mediaeval processions, to alert the host, and, for that matter, all his neighbours three streets away, of a guest's arrival. Unfortunately, with so many people opting for this method of communication, in preference to ringing an individual doorbell, if one were to investigate every boot that sounds in his street, he would spend his life glued to his front door, or like the cuckoo in the clock, popping his head through the window at regular intervals.

The other announcement most commonly made by means of the hooter is the change of lights. Under normal circumstances, this is done to alert an absent-minded motorist that the time has come for him to release his brake and resume the journey. But Jordanians leave nothing to chance. They do not wait for the motorist ahead to show himself distracted, they let rip with horn at the first hint of a change of light. Even, I am assured, the first car at the traffic light, bows in respect to this honourable tradition and honks before moving. Then again, it could be a Pavlovian reflex, judging by the speed with which it happens. In fact, a physicist, visiting the country, once suggested adopting a scientific definition of a split second as being the lapse of time between the traffic light turning amber and a Jordanian tooting his horn.

In addition to these innovative applications, the klaxon is frequently employed as a substitute for indicators and brakes. It emits the mating call when a male motorist sees a woman pedestrian. It alerts the neighbourhood of the advent of the gas-carrier salesman or the vegetable monger. One wonders what life in Amman would have been like had the inventor of the motorcar not equipped it with a horn.



# Exploring the ancient mysteries and technology of three centuries of industrial production at Jerash

By Rami G. Khouri

Special to the Jordan Times

This is the second of two articles on the excavation and restoration of the hippodrome at Jerash. The first article, which appeared on Sunday, discussed the architecture and history of the arena, and today's examines the exciting new information being obtained from the extensive ceramics industry that was located in the arena after its fall into disrepair in the later 3rd century AD.

WHEN INA Kehrberg started work at Jerash in the early 1980s as a member of the Australian team excavating the northern part of the city, she expected to spend a few years studying pottery, glass and other material remains from the Roman and Byzantine periods. Little did she know that 15 years later, she would be — literally — knee-deep in four million pottery sherds excavated from the hippodrome at the southern end of the city — representing perhaps the single greatest source of well-dated information on ceramics technology and industrial evolution in the ancient Levant.

The reason for this treasure-trove of ancient pottery is that after the hippodrome went out of use as a chariot-racing arena in the 3rd century AD, it quickly became the centre of the ceramics industry at Jerash. The suitable location provided a large, open space outside but also near the city walls, conveniently divided up into over one-hundred separate chambers (the "rooms" formed by the supporting structures for the arena's seats, which are clearly visible today).

From the 3rd to the early 7th centuries AD (with a pause in the politically turbulent 5th century), the hippodrome area was the largest and most important industrial ceramics area in Roman Gerasa (Jerash's ancient name), producing large amounts of pottery for export as well as for use in the city and its immediate environs. Numerous kilns were located in and near the hippodrome, with most kilns in the Late Byzantine era located outside the arena walls. Some kilns were destroyed during bulldozing operations in the 1960s, and others were destroyed in antiquity, perhaps when the hippodrome was briefly reused for official purposes. Those kilns that have endured have provided important information on ancient technologies and historical chronologies. Equally fascinating, and much more rare, is the enormous collection of over four million sherds that represent discarded, misfired, broken or unfired ceramic items, including lamps and other vessels.

For over 300 years, successive generations of potters threw their waste materials into the empty chambers of the hippodrome, with the discarded first firing of the chambers to the brim and then overspilling outside the hippodrome walls. This process started in the late 3rd/early 4th centuries, initially in the chambers at

the north end of the arena (nearest to the city) and then moving in a counter-clockwise direction until all the chambers were full. In the Late Byzantine period (late 6th/early 7th centuries) the potters seem to have made another circuit of all the chambers, because Late Byzantine discards cover the top of almost every chamber. The dump comprises all the chambers and an area outside the north-west corner, but not any internal part of the arena. After the hippodrome was abandoned after the Late Byzantine period, earthquakes toppled the arena's walls and arches, and conveniently sealed in the previous three centuries of industrial waste. The dump contents, kilns, several coin hoards and other excavated materials fall into three distinct and well delineated periods: the late Roman era in the late 3rd/early 4th centuries, the Early Byzantine era in the late 4th/early 5th centuries, and the Late Byzantine era in the late 6th/early 7th centuries.

In studying this material during the past 10 years, Ina Kehrberg has started to compile a very detailed "catalogue" of ceramic types and technologies that is useful for both narrow technical purposes and broad historical-cultural ones. It completes inventories of specific pottery forms known from the excavations inside the city; establishes almost flawless pottery typological series; fills in missing links between a variety of different forms; reveals chronological overlaps and successions of types; indicates regional and workshop variations; clarifies cultural transitions between different historical periods and environments; and, provides a "microscopic" view of very small variations in the shape of a ceramic item, such as a lamp or bowl, that may have been used over a period of decades or even centuries.

## A peek into the human past

The study of the massive ancient pottery dump also allows precious insights into the people and families who operated the kilns and pottery workshops. Some unfired vessels still have fingerprints of a potter or his assistants, and a succession of unfired vessels in the dump area of the same kiln span nearly a century of time. Such unusual finds might allow for studies of genealogies of ancient potters or pottery-making families, including informa-

tion on the age of the workers, whether or not they were from the same family, and whether the same family owned or operated the same kiln over a period of several generations. We can also peek into the emotions of our ancient ancestors: The deep fingerprints on one grievously squashed and unbaked bowl obviously were those of an angry potter who squeezed and crumpled up the vessel and threw it away.

The comprehensive variety of pottery forms includes every type of vessel known from the excavations, and some that are new to Jerash. One of the interesting discoveries is that ancient potters' workshops did not specialise, for many different forms of pottery were repeatedly found in the same kiln area.

"We even know that a potter stacked many different kinds of vessels for one firing in the same kiln, and thus did not specialise in individual wares," Kehrberg told the Jordan Times in a recent interview. One lot of unfired objects that was ready to go into a kiln in the Late Byzantine period included fine wares like Jerash bowls, ordinary wares like flat bowls, jars, jugs, casseroles and lids, coarse wares such as roof tiles and large water pipe segments, and even Jerash lamps with small animal heads attached to their handles. The evidence from the hippodrome suggests that Gerasa's potters differentiated themselves not by type of production but by quality of production, which reflected their different levels of technical and artistic skills. In addition, the evidence indicates that potters used different types of clay from several sources in the region.

## Chronologies reassessed

One of the most important results of this work has been the revelation that distinct ceramic forms and shapes that were thought to come from one historical period may, in fact, reflect the cultural legacies of other, earlier periods. Since pottery is a key means of dating architecture and other ancient material remains, the lessons from the hippodrome project may force archaeologists to reassess some of their accepted dating techniques, at least for those excavated levels with pottery forms that are now known to reflect a reuse in ancient times.

Ina Kehrberg has identified at least one potter's workshop where late 3rd century Roman lamp forms were reproduced without change in the 4th/early 5th centuries Early Byzantine period, alongside typical Early Byzantine lamps and pottery. The Early Byzantine potter in this case used an intact Late Roman lamp to produce a gypsum mould that in turn was used to produce new lamps, sometimes with small adjustments that catered to

## Hippodrome was turned into a giant ceramics factory during 3rd-to-6th centuries

Byzantine tests. The round Late Roman lamps with their distinctive decorations were also elongated slightly in the Byzantine era, to produce a "hybrid" form that combined design characteristics from both periods. A similar situation occurs with Late Byzantine lamp forms appearing in Umayyad levels — perhaps because Umayyad era potters simply kept using perfectly good Byzantine era moulds.

In Late Roman kiln dumps, Ina Kehrberg identified two Roman lamp matrices from the 1st/early 2nd centuries. In the foundation trenches of the hippodrome, the excavators found 1st/2nd century AD pottery sherds and dense pockets of misfired and discarded 1st century AD sherds. This indicates that the hippodrome area was used for pottery production well before the Late Roman period (which is not surprising, in view of the ancient penchant to site ceramics industries outside the city walls, near the cemeteries which demanded lamps and other burial goods). Also, these facts indicate that Early Roman potters may have kept using lamp forms designed and first produced in the Late Hellenistic period, a century or two earlier.

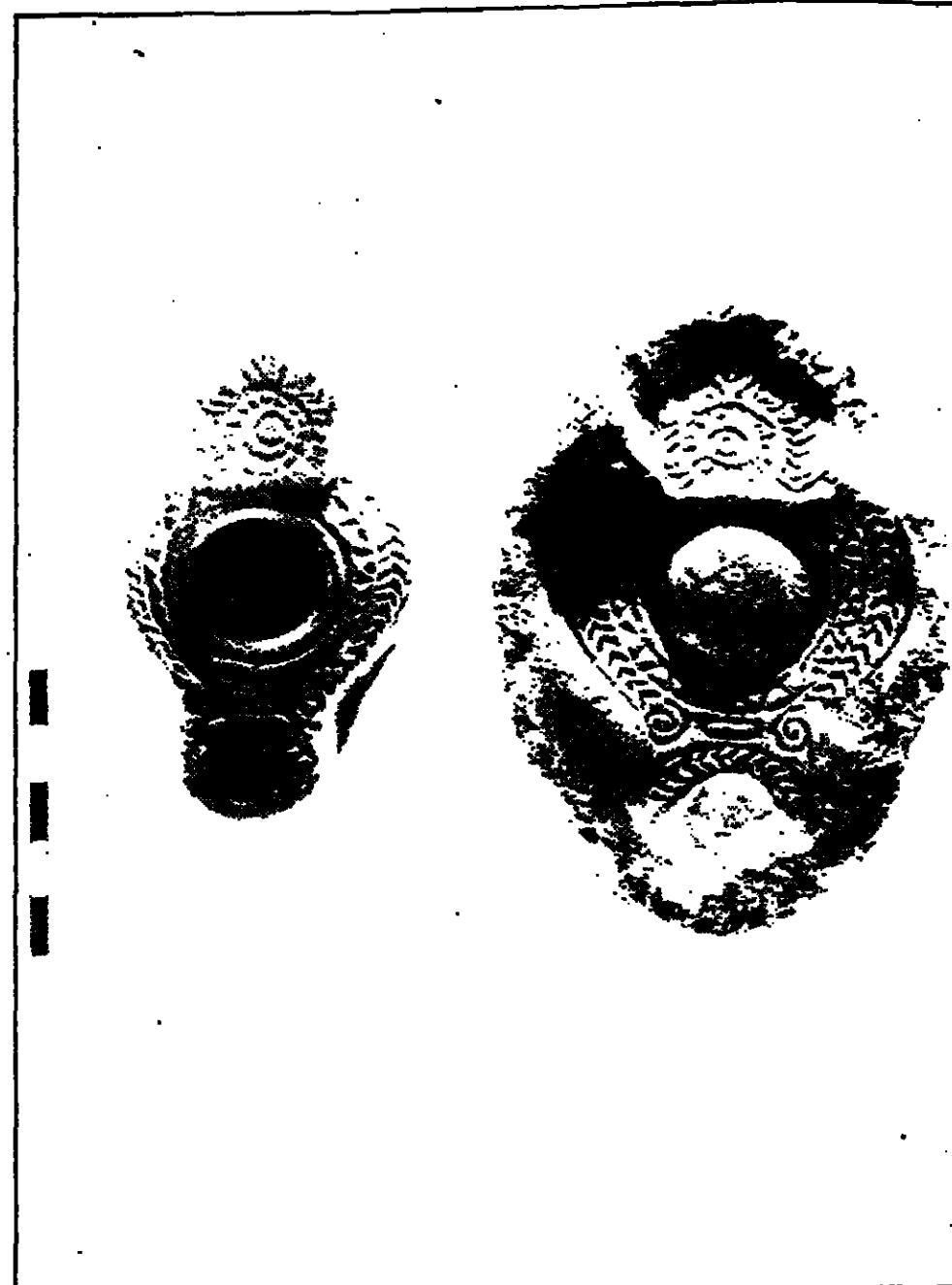
A striking aspect of the ancient pottery industry at Gerasa is how little it changed over time. The potters, having developed an efficient and profitable production system, only made slight variations in shapes or decoration over time. Another verdict over time seems to show that today's mass produced pottery in Jordan is of much poorer quality than that manufactured thousands of years ago, in terms of durability of glazes and finishes or of ability to retain water. "Function and beauty are separated today," Kehrberg notes, "with some people making beautiful forms that are designed for display and others making simpler forms designed for everyday use. Very few people now make ceramic vessels that are both aesthetic and functional."

## Tools of the trade

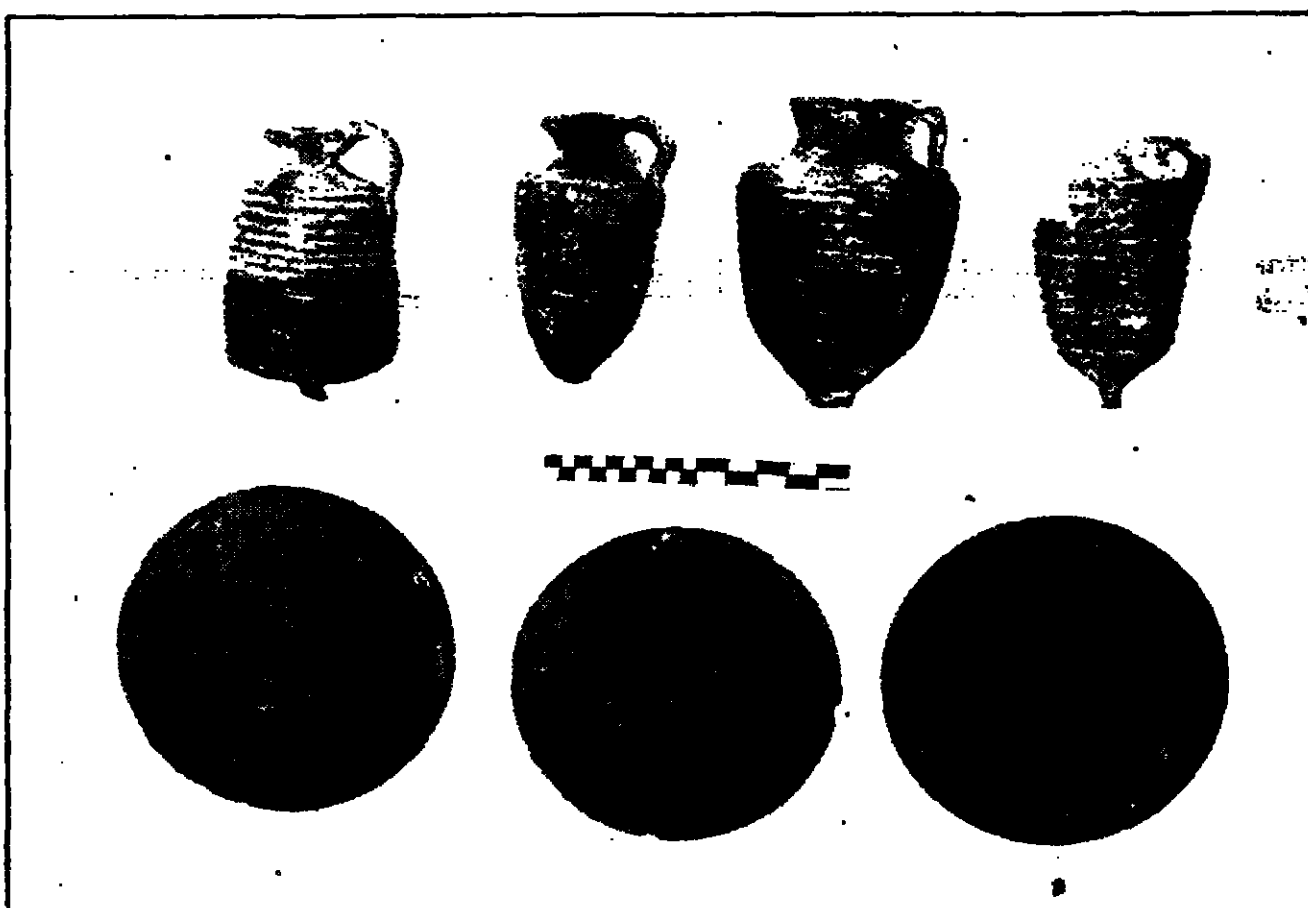
The hippodrome project has also revealed the ancient use of small tools made of chipped and flaked sherds of pottery and glass, hundreds of which were found in Late Roman and Byzantine contexts associ-

ated with discarded pottery or production of calcium carbonate (lime). None were associated with the earlier period when the hippodrome was first built and used, and none have ever been excavated in domestic contexts. The blades, scrapers, files, and rubbing/boring implements were used for two different purposes. Most were used in pottery production, for shaving off excess clay, trimming vessel contours, making decorative incisions, or burnishing bowls and platters.

Other flaked tools were found embedded in a gypsum-like material in and around large, sunken vessels and basins. Along with one lime kiln excavated just outside the north gate of the hippodrome, these "calcite factories" seem to have been components of a leather tanning industry, which used a gypsum-lime-like substance to treat animal hides. The small tools were used for scraping off hairs, fine trimming, and shaving and rubbing the leather (the same kind of installations are used today by leather industry



(Above) A Roman lamp matrix (right) that was used to make lamps (left), and below ceramic plates and jugs excavated in the hippodrome (Photos by Ina Kehrberg)



workers in Fez, Morocco, while shoemakers in the Levant often use simple glass sherds to cut leather). These flaked and chipped

tools were used in two main periods: for the ceramics and tanning industries in the late 3rd/4th centuries AD, and in the ceramics

industry again in the late 6th/early 7th centuries AD (by which time the tanning industry had long vanished after about a century of

existence). This work is sponsored and funded totally by the Jordanian Department of Antiquities.

## King, Mubarak hold talks

(Continued from page 1)

The two leaders expressed optimism about the new round of talks that Syria and Israel will start in the United States Wednesday.

Welcoming what he described as the tangible progress on the Syrian-Israeli track, King Hussein expressed hope that the objective of achieving comprehensive peace in the Middle East will soon be achieved.

And once Israel signs peace treaties with Syria and Lebanon and a solution to the Palestinian problem "takes its course" Israel's nuclear armament will have to be addressed, said Mr. Mubarak, urging the international community to help make the region an area free of weapons of mass destruction.

The Egyptian president said he would reject arguments that Israel, which is reported to have about 200 nuclear warheads, would need nuclear weapons because Iran is said to be developing its nuclear capabilities.

Addressing the Lebanese-Israeli peace talks, Mr. Mubarak said that the Lebanese track is progressing in parallel with the Syrian track in accordance with the choice of Lebanon.

Responding to a question on Syrian-Jordanian relations, the King said "from our side, there are no problems," noting that all parties to the Arab-Israeli peace talks started from the same point in the Madrid peace conference with the aim of achieving comprehensive peace in the area.

On Jordanian-Palestinian relations, King Hussein stressed the special ties that bind the two peoples but reiterated that the future of these relations will be decided only when the Palestinian people are free to choose.

"(PLO Chairman Yasser) Arafat told me that the draft (agreement) for confederation is ready and in my pocket but I told him to keep it there" as the nature of the future Jordanian-Palestinian relations should be left for the future when the Palestinians regain their rights and are able to express their views under conditions of freedom, the King said.

Mr. Mubarak, who held a closed round of talks with King Hussein before they were joined by officials from both sides, said that achieving Arab reconciliation will serve the interests of all Arab countries.

The Egyptian president told journalists that chances for achieving Arab recon-

ciliation are "better" now than they used to be earlier, pointing to the complexity of the issues that divided the Arab World following the Gulf war.

Mr. Mubarak noted that improvement in Jordanian-Saudi relations, adding that Saudi Foreign Minister Saud Al Faisal had informed him that he will be visiting the Kingdom this week.

Responding to a question on Jordanian-Egyptian relations, the King said that these ties are based on solid foundations.

"There is no sensitivity (in Jordanian-Egyptian relations) and there is no justification for it to exist," King

Hussein said in response to a question.

"Egypt is Egypt with its role and size and Jordan is Jordan. We work together for the benefit of the Arab nation," the King said.

Urging international and Arab cooperation to counter the spread of terrorism, Mr. Mubarak said terrorism has become a global phenomena, adding that "terrorism has nothing to do with Islam."

King Hussein said that the Jordanian society will not allow extremism to prosper in it, pointing to the commitment to be National Charter which was drafted by representatives of all shades in the Kingdom's political spec-

## Israel withdraws from villages

(Continued from page 1)

known as a hotbed of resistance to Israeli rule, in recent years gained a reputation as the West Bank's capital of car thefts.

Nearly 100,000 people live in the five villages, which are part of what the Israel-PLO autonomy accords define as "Area B." The area is to come under joint Israeli-Palestinian security control while enjoying autonomy in civilian areas.

"Our forces have overriding responsibility," Col. Moshe Elad told Israel radio. "The Palestinian police are

responsible for law and order while security remains the responsibility of the Israeli army."

Col. Elad said the Hebron area redeployment went well and was optimistic that the two forces would work together successfully.

There were no numbers available on the remaining Israeli security presence in the area handed over to the Palestinians Tuesday.

Shlomo Dror, a spokesman for Israel's outgoing West Bank military government, said some Israeli police were moved out of Dahariya's market and other positions.

but soldiers remain stationed in the area.

"The army doesn't have much to do. We don't have too many soldiers there," Mr. Dror added.

Israel's withdrawal from Palestinian-populated parts of the West Bank has proceeded over the past six weeks with minimal friction and no victims.

Israeli troops have already left the towns of Jenin, Nablus, Tulkarem, Kalkiya and Bethlehem — in addition to Jericho and the Gaza Strip, which were handed to the PLO in May 1994. Israel is to quit Ramallah within days and most of Hebron itself by March.

## Egypt release 95 Brotherhood supporters

CAIRO (AP) — Egypt on

Tuesday released 95 men, most believed to be supporters of the fundamentalist Muslim Brotherhood, after they spent a month in jail for allegedly planning to disrupt last month's parliament elections.

State security prosecutor Hesham Serray said some could face prosecution later because police say they found knives, daggers and anti-government leaflets in their

houses. He did not say how many might face trial.

The men were rounded up — some from their homes — because "investigations showed that they were preparing to make trouble during the elections," Mr. Serray told the Associated Press.

The Brotherhood is legally banned, but the group had been allowed to function openly until last January when the government accused it of links to radical groups that have carried out anti-government attacks.

The government began cracking down on the brotherhood, arresting scores of its members and putting some of trial. Last month, a military court sentenced 54 Brotherhood members to jail

terms of up to five years. The Muslim Brotherhood, Egypt's largest opposition group, has charged that nearly 800 of its supporters were detained in connection with the Nov. 29 elections and the Dec. 6 run-off.

Some were accused of actions such as disrupting traffic and incitement. Most are believed to have been released. Police confirmed just 240 of the arrests. Brotherhood officials charged that the government was going after its supporters — including designated poll watchers — to reduce the group's chance of winning parliament seats.

The Brotherhood fielded 150 candidates in the elections for 444 parliament seats, but won only one.

## Turkish rivals agree on pact

(Continued from page 1)

the party with most seats in parliament as prime minister, but this is not a constitutional obligation.

Mr. Demirel on Monday accepted Ms. Ciller's resigna-

tion, but asked her to remain as a caretaker prime minister until a new government was formed.

The new parliament was expected to convene next week after which Demirel will appoint a new prime minister.

# Pakistan asks Muslims to focus on technology

Mr. Leghari said today's Islamic World contributed little to the overall growth and progress of science, an area which he said was "once their sole monopoly." He urged OIC members to reprioritize their development objectives.

He said new priorities must include mass literacy, technological education, development of human resources, promotion of economic growth, reduction of poverty, improvement in health and scientific management of resources and environment.

Noting most Islamic countries were maritime states bordering the Atlantic,

Mediterranean, Red Sea and the Indian and Pacific Oceans, he said: "Such a large marine area, if properly explored and exploited can bring great economic prosperity."

He said vigorous research could lead to the development of marine resources, generation of energy by tidal waves, ocean thermal energy conversion or protection of marine environment.

"However, few Islamic countries have created suitable oceanographic research and development facilities," he said.

The projects included joint Saudi-foreign ventures worth around 101.5 billion riyals (\$27 billion), mostly in chemicals.

The large investments have pushed up the share of the non-oil industrial sector in the gross domestic product (GDP) to 56.8 per cent, accounting for nearly 245.5 billion riyals (\$65.4 billion). The contribution of the joint ventures alone stood at 42.7 per cent.

between chambers of commerce and participation in trade fairs, replacing a trade accord concluded in 1968.

According to official figures released by Kuwait in October, Iranian exports to Kuwait run at about \$87 million annually and Kuwaiti exports to Iran are less than \$10 million.

45 Name of 12  
46 popes  
47 Oven feature  
48 Nervous  
49 Enamelware  
50 Additional  
52 Historian Durant

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## Jordan returns but Rockets rule

WASHINGTON (AFP) — Michael Jordan returned, but the Houston Rockets still ruled.

Those were the high points of 1995 for the National Basketball Association (NBA), which also expanded beyond the United States for the first time, settled pay disputes with players and referees and named a 1996 Olympic "Dream Team."

But nothing approached the magic moment in March when Michael Jordan returned to the Chicago Bulls at Indianapolis after 18 months of retirement.

Jordan had switched to minor-league baseball but was unhappy about having to take sides in the major league players' strike. When pushed, he quit the Chicago White Sox and returned home to Chicago.

Rumors swirled for a week before a two-word statement, "I'm back," said all there was to say.

Even though Jordan was inconsistent in his first game back and the Bulls lost to the Indiana Pacers at Indianapolis, the promise of future excitement energised the sport.

The Bulls lost in the second round of the playoffs to Orlando, led by Shaquille O'Neal and Anfernee "Penny" Hardaway. Jordan's struggles prompted extensive off-season training and the high-leaping star has returned to his 30-point per game production. "When I didn't play well in the Orlando series, I started second guessing myself," Jordan said. "Some doubt crept in. Maybe we expected too much. I wanted to come right back and prove I could do it. But I think this can be the most exciting season because no one really knows what to expect."

The Bulls, boosted by the arrival to top rebounder Dennis Rodman, took command from the start of the 1995-96 season and now have the NBA's best record. Jordan leads the league in scoring. Orlando also started strong despite a broken thumb that sidelined O'Neal for the Magic's first 22 games. Miami was a surprise success under new coach Pat Riley and Alonzo Mourning, obtained in an opening-day trade with Charlotte.

The era without Jordan has seen the rise of Hakeem Olajuwon and the Rockets, who won their second consecutive



Orlando Magic guard Anfernee Hardaway (left) slams a basket as Houston Rockets centre Hakeem Olajuwon looks on during their Christmas day NBA game at the Orlando Arena (AFP photo)

crown by sweeping Orlando in the final.

Nigerian-born Olajuwon sealed his place among the NBA's elite by sparking Houston from a sixth-place regular season finish to an unprecedented playoff sweep of the NBA season's four winningest clubs.

### BASKETBALL REVIEW NBA

"When you have a great player like Hakeem, he amazes us every year," Houston coach Rudy Tomjanovich said. "I have never seen a guy have a more consistent spectacular playoff."

Olajuwon was among 10 players named to the 1996 U.S. Olympic basketball team, dubbed "Dream Team III." Olajuwon was granted a special exemption to play for the United States after becoming a citizen last year.

Joining Olajuwon on the Atlanta-bound roster are O'Neal and Hardaway of Orlando, Scottie Pippen of the Bulls, Detroit's Grant

Hill, Utah's Karl Malone and John Stockton, Indiana's Reggie Miller, San Antonio's David Robinson and Milwaukee's Glenn Robinson. "Playing on the original Dream Team was a great experience, but I'm really looking forward to playing with the younger guys like

time. But it did not start with regular referees. They rejected a league deal and were replaced by minor-league substitutes for the first six weeks of the season. Their return was greeted with joy by coaches and players who typically complain about their every call.

The NBA's global expansion continued with more top international players in the league, such as Yugoslavia's Predrag Danilovic with Miami and Lithuania's Arvydas Sabonis at Portland.

Two dozen international players are now in the league, enough to stock two clubs. The NBA also expanded by two teams, adding Canadian clubs in Toronto and Vancouver.

The Pacific rim Grizzlies were not even two months old before setting a new league standard for fertility with their 19th consecutive defeat.

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## Ripken and Braves top troubled year

WASHINGTON (AFP) — Baseball suffered a bittersweet 1995, stung by anger over a lingering labour dispute that could not be forgotten, even after long-awaited achievements by players and teams.

Atlanta won the World Series title after three near misses, edging a Cleveland club that reached the playoffs for the first time in 41 years.

Cal Ripken set a major-league record for consecutive games played, then took a victory lap to cap an emotional 22-minute ceremony that captured the nation's attention and brought joy in troubled times for the sport.

And Hideo Nomo, the first Japanese-born player in the major leagues since 1966, won the National League Rookie of the Year award, attracting sellout crowds and helping remind American fans why they fell in love with the game.

But owners and players feuded the entire year without reaching agreement on a labour contract. The dispute, which wiped out the 1994 World Series, led to the shortening of the 1995 season by three weeks.

Appeals from U.S. president Bill Clinton to end the stalemate were rejected by owners, who stood firm on salary cap demands and threatened to open the season with replacements culled from the lowest levels of the sport.

These players trained in March and were ready to begin until a ruling by U.S. District Court Judge Sonya Sotomayor ordered everyone to work under former work rules. After 232 days on strike, the players were back.

But fans stayed away. Attendance was off 20 per cent for the season and even more in the early days of the season. Ticket giveaways and trades of high-priced players followed, widening the gap between weak and strong clubs.

Fans searched for someone



Five Atlanta Braves pile onto pitcher Mark Wohlers as the Braves win the World Series with a 1-0 win over the Cleveland Indians at Atlanta's Fulton County Stadium, October 28 (Reuters Photo)

to love and found him in Nomo, the 26-year-old pitcher who signed a two million-dollar deal with the Los Angeles Dodgers after a strong career in Japan.

secutive games played on September 6 and continued to finish the season with a streak of 2,153 games. "Once it got close, I started to think of the

City. An expanded playoff format produced exciting games, with Seattle and Colorado reaching the playoffs for the first time in their history.

But the World Series belonged to the Braves. Atlanta's Greg Maddux was the game's best pitcher for a fourth consecutive year and Tom Glavine allowed Cleveland only one hit in the deciding sixth game of the best-of-seven final.

The Braves won the finale 1-0 on a home run by David Justice, who felt the pressure of earlier comments about how poor his hometown fans were supporting the club.

Mickey Mantle, baseball hero for a generation of fans, died of liver cancer and inspired an increase in organ donations.

### BASEBALL REVIEW

Nomo went on to start for the NL in the All-Star Game, finish 13-6 with a 2.54 earned-run average and led the league in strikeouts. His success touched off a wave of scouts travelling to Japan in search of major league talent.

But the hero of the year was Ripken, whose standard for durability appealed to workers and whose grace at the attention was a marked contrast to the owner-player bickering of prior months.

Ripken, 35, broke Lou Gehrig's mark of 2,130 con-

enormity of the event and I started to feel a little bit of pressure," Ripken said.

Ripken remains 62 games shy of beating the world baseball record for consecutive games played, the 2,215 in a row by retired Hiroshima Carp third baseman Sachio Kingasa.

If Ripken plays every game at the start of next season and there are no rainouts or postponements, he would match Kingasa's mark on June 12 in Detroit and break it the following night in Kansas

## Iraq's Talaba, Japan's Bellmare in Asian cup final

TOKYO (AFP) — A four-goal blast by Brazilian striker Emerson swept Bellmare Hiratsuka into the Asian Cup Winners Cup final at the expense of holders and J-League rivals Yokohama Flügels.

Emerson was the star of a remarkable semi-final at Hiratsuka, near Tokyo, on Tuesday night, that saw four penalty awards and needed sudden death play-off time added to get the 4-3 results.

The 22-year-old Brazilian scored all his side's goals, including two from the penalty spot.

Bellmare now meet Iraqi side Talaba in the final in Yokohama on Wednesday. Talaba's Kuwaiti opponents Kazma withdrew from the competition in a political protest showing lingering animosity since the 1990 Gulf war. Kazma claimed 600 Kuwaitis are still being held prisoner in Baghdad.

But there was no politics to mar the all-Japanese soccer clash on a bitterly cold Christmas night.

Emerson scored with penalties in the 14th and 44th minutes — the first for a foul by Flügels' sweeper Naoto Otake and the second for a handball by substitute defender Yasuhiro Hato — to give Bellmare a 2-0 half-time lead.

But 10 minutes into the second half, the Flügels' Brazilian import Evair also scored from the penalty spot after Bellmare midfielder Simao brought down Olympic team captain Masakiyo Mazzono.

Emerson completed his hat-trick in the 71st minute, breaking through the centre of the Flügels' defence to shoot home. The contest then looked over.

### NBA/NFL results

WASHINGTON (AFP) — National Basketball Association results

San Antonio 105, Phoenix 100  
Orlando 92, Houston 90  
Result of National Football League game played on Monday, the final game of the regular season:

Dallas 37, Arizona 13

## Weah named European Footballer of the Year

MONROVIA (AFP) — Liberia's sports ambassador George Weah said Tuesday he would have to work harder to justify his selection as European Footballer of the Year.

"The title poses a great responsibility on me because I must continue to work harder to prove to the world that I deserve it," the AC Milan star said.

Weah, who has also been voted Confederation of African Football player of the Year for 1995, added: "My achievements bring pride to the nation and people of war-torn Liberia."

Youth and Sports Minister Fancois Massaquoi, called on the Liberian youth to emulate "Weah's shining examples through hardwork, dedication and discipline."

"The only positive thing we have now in this country is Weah and football," Massaquoi said.

Weah was announced on Monday as the 1995 winner of football's prestigious Ballon d'Or Award — the first time a non-European has been honoured.

AC Milan striker Weah, 29, beat out Bayern Munich's Jurgen Klinsmann into second place with Ajax's Finnish international Jari Litmanen in third spot.

The fourth and fifth placings went respectively to Alessandro Del Piero of Juventus and Patrick Kluivert of Ajax Amsterdam.

Since 1956, French weekly magazine France Football has awarded the prize to the best European player, but the rules were changed this year. Any player in European league, regardless of nationality, could win the prize.

This meant that Argentina's Diego Maradona, who played for Sevilla and Naples, and Brazil's Romario, who represented PSV Eindhoven and Barcelona, might have won it in former years.

Earlier this year, Weah starred for Paris Saint Germain in topping the 1994/95 European Cup goalscoring charts with seven. PSG won all their six group matches, before losing to Milan in the



Liberian George Weah, 29-year-old AC Milan striker, won the prestigious Golden Ball award in the journalists' poll conducted by France Football magazine on Dec. 25 (Reuters photo)

semi-finals.

Weah is simply a striker that has it all. He has a blistering shot with either foot, is good in the air, has pace, athleticism, an acute tactical sense, and relishes the big occasion.

And Milan, well aware of his qualities, were soon proved right in moving for Weah after he teamed up well with Roberto Baggio and Montenegro's Dejan Savicevic up front.

Milan currently top the Italian championship and have qualified for March's UEFA Cup quarter-finals.

And last season, Weah won two trophies with PSG — the French Cup and the French League Cup.

Though Weah qualified with Liberia for January's 1996 African Nations Cup finals, it was his performances in the club-scene which won him acclaim.

Weah, who moved from

Paris Saint Germain to AC Milan in the summer for nine million dollars, is also a two-time winner of the African Footballer of the Year award — in 1989 and 1994.

The most prestigious past winners include France's Michel Platini, Holland's Marco Van Basten and Johan Cruyff, who jointly hold the record as three-time winners.

A list of 50 players was drawn up last month and a journalist from each European country registered with governing body UEFA, making 49 as Azerbaijan did not participate. nominated their five best players — five points for the best, four for the second, etc.

Weah was voted 20 times in first spot, with 12 times for Klinsmann and six for Litmanen.

Only two defenders, Italy's Paolo Maldini and Germany's Matthias Sammer, made the top 10.

### Ballon d'Or standings

1. George Weah (Lib-AC Milan)	144 pts
2. Jurgen Klinsmann (Ger-Bayern Munich)	106
3. Jari Litmanen (Fin-Ajax Amsterdam)	67
4. Alessandro Del Piero (Itl-Juventus)	57
5. Patrick Kluivert (Ned-Ajax Amsterdam)	47
6. Gianfranco Zola (Ita-Parma)	41
7. Paolo Maldini (Itl-AC Milan)	36
8. Marc Overmars (Ned-Ajax Amsterdam)	33
9. Matthias Sammer (Ger-Borussia Dortmund)	18
10. Michael Laudrup (Den-Real Madrid)	17

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## Sayonara leads fleet out of Sydney Harbour

SYDNEY (R) — U.S. maxi Sayonara, with media tycoon Rupert Murdoch on board, stormed out of Sydney Harbour to lead the fleet in the 51st Sydney-to-Hobart yacht race and a possible race record on Tuesday.

However, the state-of-the-art \$2.0 million maxi gained the lead only after Australian maxi Fudge saw her mainsail tear while beating towards the heads in the steady 10-15 knot northeasterly.

Fudge, the world's largest maxi at 25.8 metres won the start with America's Cup skipper Australian Iain Murray at the helm.

Fudge, formerly Matador and built in 1990 for America's Cup winner U.S. yachtsman Bill Koch, had been regarded as too old and heavy to be a real contender in the 630 nautical mile race. But she surprised the fleet with her speed at the start.

Yacht designer Murray ordered dramatic changes in the past few days, removing seven tonnes of ballast and lowering the mainsail 2.5 metres to improve performance.

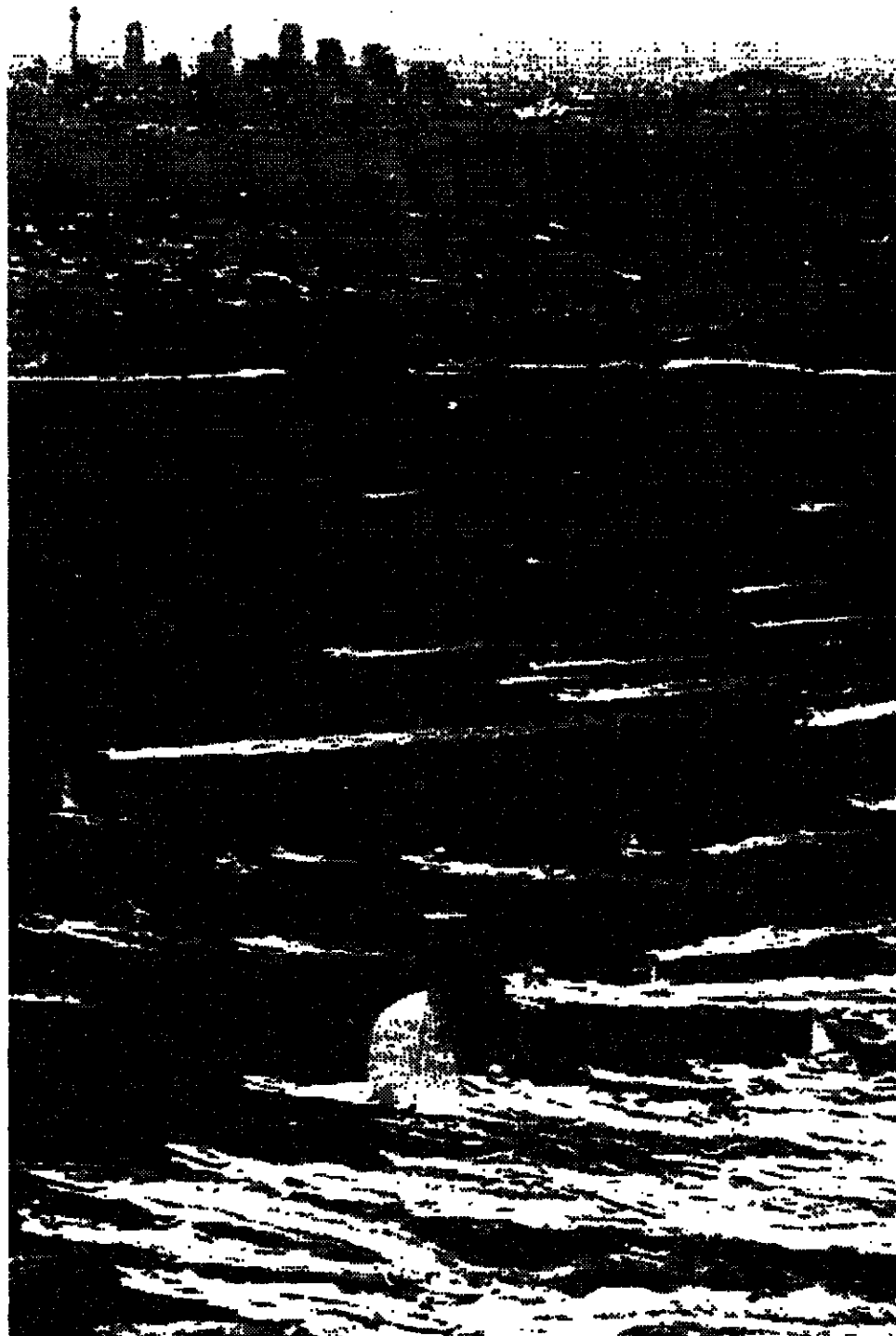
As the yachts tacked along the west of the harbour, Fudge opened a comfortable lead over the 23.73-metre (77.86 feet) race favourite Sayonara and the 22.9-metre (75 feet) Australian maxi Brindabella, which came second in 1994 by seven minutes.

After cutting across the harbour to the eastern shore with about one km to the harbour mark Sayonara forced Brindabella to tack away.

But as the three maxis ploughed towards the heads, Fudge's mainsail ripped loose at the foot, flapping wildly.

Despite frantic efforts to reef in the main, Sayonara quickly slid past the giant yacht and into the lead.

Sayonara, boasting a crew



U.S. maxi Sayonara outside Sydney heads Sydney to Hobart yacht race December 26 surrounded by pleasure craft at the start of the (Reuters photo)

bittered with America's Cup and Whitbread around-the-world sailors, opened up a five-boat-length lead and cleared the harbour mark in 18 minutes 47 seconds at the head of the 98-boat fleet.

Second favourite Brindabella followed 55 seconds later with Fudge a further 15 seconds behind. In fourth was the downwind flyer pocket Maxi Amazon, regarded as

a real danger if the winds blow consistently from the north.

But all eyes were on Sayonara, the new ILC70 maxi made of carbon fibre and powered by computer-moulded Kevlar sails, which is tipped to break the 20-year race record.

Shortly after hoisting her spinnaker at the seaward mark and turning south, Sayonara was clocked surfing at 16 knots. In order to break the race record she has to average 10.2 knots.

U.S. maxi ketch Kialoa set a record two days 14 hours 36 minutes and 56 seconds in 1975.

Race weather officials have forecast a mild 20-25 knot southerly change should hit the fleet on Wednesday, followed by a westerly on Thursday — giving the front runners a fast run across the

notorious bass strait to Hobart.

The Sydney-to-Hobart, one of the world's top three blue water classic yacht races along with England's Fastnet and the United States' Newport to Bermuda, is nicknamed 'hell on high water' having claimed two lives and left scores of yachts wrecked. In 1993 mountainous seas forced more than half the fleet to retire due to damage.

Rupert Murdoch, chairman of news corporation, has competed in four Hobarts, sailing his timber ketch Iina into second place in 1964.

Murdoch, who had surgery on a finger last Thursday after an accident on Sayonara during a harbour race, was invited to sail to Hobart as general crew by owner and friend Larry Ellison, founder of U.S. computer firm Oracle.

## Asian stars shine in '95 racket sports

PARIS (AFP) — Asian racket sports exponents shone in 1995 with China winning two badminton world titles, plus a clean-sweep seven world table tennis championships golds and the men's singles World Cup, but Pakistan earned the squash men's singles title.

In table tennis, China's World Cup winner Kong Linghui gave a taste of his strong challenge for next year's Olympics after winning the World Cup singles in Nimes, France in October. Kong, who added the World Cup crown to the world title he won in Tianjin, China in May, said: "Winning in Atlanta will be much tougher than my world championship or World Cup titles."

China completed a clean-sweep of all seven world championship titles on home soil earlier in the year.

Should Kong, who beat Germany's 1992 European champion Jorg Rosskopf 18-21, 24-22, 22-20, 21-14 to earn the 33,000 World Cup top prize, win in Atlanta, Georgia, he would complete an unprecedented treble.

He would become the holder of the world, Olympic and World Cup titles at the same time.

Kong, quick on his feet and with a powerful righthanded attacking game, showed tenacity in tight situations throughout the match.

Rosskopf, however, known for a lightning fast backhand, good physical fitness and steady nerves, could have won 3-0, but kept losing big leads.

China have now won the World Cup title nine times in the 16-year history of this 16-man invitation event — the most prestigious annual tournament in the sport as the world championships are every two years and the Olympics are every four years.

Guo Yuehua won in 1980 and 1982, Jiang Jialiang won in 1984, Chen Xinhua, who now plays for England, won for China in 1985, Chen Longcan won a year later, and Teng Yi won in 1987.

Jansher Khan, who won the 1995 men's World Open Squash Championships in Cyprus in November, was on the verge of pulling out during the final because of terrible pain in a blistered right foot.

Khan, 26, who beat England's Del Harris 15-10, 17-14, 16-17, 15-8 in the final for a record seventh victory, said afterwards: "The blisters were so painful, when I lost the third game, I was about to scratch."

However, Khan decided to

keep going and managed to win in 101 minutes for his seventh title, one better than the six crowns held jointly by Jansher and legend and compatriot Jahangir Khan.

A large blister on the ball of his right foot and another on his right heel were lanced on Friday night and bandaged. However the pain was considerable until the bandage was tightened for the fourth game when Khan ran out an easy winner. Khan added afterwards: "My country Pakistan will be very happy with the record. They have all been waiting for it."

And on the match, he continued: "Harris played very well, but I have played him before and beaten him. Even though he took the third game, I still had confidence at 2-1 up."

"I thought I could keep him back and force him to make mistakes, which I did in the fourth set."

Khan also staked his claim

for the best squash player of all time as he earned a seventh win.

For Khan, unbeaten in 13 tournaments dating back to early 1994, it was yet another milestone on the way to his ultimate ambition of becoming the greatest ever.

The three candidates are Australia's Geoff Hunt, an eight-time British Open winner and four-time world champion, Jahangir Khan of Pakistan, a 10-time British Open winner and a six-time world champion, compared to Jansher Khan's seven world titles, one better than his namesake, and four British Opens.

Meanwhile, in the world of badminton, Heryanto Arby of Indonesia and China's Ye Zhaoying were the singles winners in the world championships in Lausanne, Switzerland in May.

Arby overcame poor form in the Sudirman Cup world mixed team event the week

before to beat South Korea's Park Sung Woo 15-11, 15-8 in the singles final.

And Ye was the surprise winner — Olympic and defending world champion Susi Susanti of Indonesia was the favourite — in the women's event.

Ye beat compatriot Han Jingna 11-7, 11-0 in the final. The week before in the Sudirman Cup, China caused a sensation to beat holders and favourites Indonesia 3-1 in a controversial final.

At the end of the fourth rubber, a Chinese flag was thrown on to the head of an Indonesian official, who refused to give the flag back. There was jostling and pushing, and, after the ensuing bad feeling, the fifth and final dead rubber was not played.

In the three doubles events, Indonesia, Denmark and South Korea had gold medals.

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#### ANSWERS TO WEEKLY BRIDGE QUIZ

Q. 1 - Both vulnerable, as South you hold:

495 086 076 4AQ10854

The bidding has proceeded:  
NORTH EAST SOUTH WEST  
1a Pass 7  
What do you bid now?

A - Although a response of two clubs followed by a rebid of three clubs shows a sub-minimum two-over-one response, your suit is not quite good enough for that action. Bid one no trump, and see what partner rebids.

Q. 2 - Both vulnerable, as South you hold:

44K 0322 0AKJ884 4-85

The bidding has proceeded:  
SOUTH WEST NORTH EAST  
1a Pass 1a Pass  
What do you bid now?

A - You have a fine six-card suit and a good hand — half the prime cards in the deck. By making the invitational jump to three diamonds, you describe all your assets to a tee.

Q. 3 - Both vulnerable, as South you hold:

4K9 0A2 0763 4KQ8543

The bidding has proceeded:  
SOUTH WEST NORTH EAST  
1a Pass 1a Pass  
What do you bid now?

A - It's close whether you should rebid clubs one more time or take a preference to spades — partner has at least a five-card suit on this sequence. Since we don't like suppressing support when we have a high honor in partner's suit, our

vote goes to two spades.

Q. 4 - Both vulnerable, as South you hold:

4AKQ852 0922 0Q104 47

The bidding has proceeded:  
SOUTH WEST NORTH EAST  
1a Pass INT Pass  
What do you bid now?

A - You have an excellent six-card suit, so you certainly want to rebid it. However, despite the quality of the suit, you have a dead minimum opening bid. Don't even think about anything other than a simple two-spade rebid.

Q. 5 - Both vulnerable, as South you hold:

4K98 0J743 082 4AQJ9

The bidding has proceeded:  
NORTH EAST SOUTH WEST  
1a Dbl 1a Pass  
What action do you take?

A - If you have some way to show a limit raise with four-card support, by all means do so. If not, all you can do for the moment is redouble, intending to make a minimum bid in hearts at your next turn.

Q. 6 - Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:

4QJ6 0A432 0J53 4A74

The bidding has proceeded:  
NORTH EAST SOUTH WEST  
1a Dbl 1a Pass  
What action do you take?

A - In light of East's double, which is taken out for the majors more so than for diamonds, introducing our weak four-card heart suit has little to gain. Instead, we would bid one no trump, showing some values and stalling the one-level from the enemy.

### Jordan

### Timber Processing Industries Co. Ltd. (JTPI)



With reference to the company's earlier advertisement about the sale of the plants which was set on December 28, 1995 as a deadline to receive bids and in compliance with the desire of the local and foreign companies which had requested an extension of the deadline so that they can pay visits to the site and present their bids after the end of the year & new year feast.

The liquidation committee has decided to extend the deadline for receiving bids until 2:00 p.m. of

**Thursday March 28, 1996.**

For more information please refer to the secretary of the liquidation committee at the following address:

**Jordan Timber Processing Industries Co. Ltd.**  
Shmeisani, Al Naser Centre building Tel: 661030 Fax: 677648  
P.O.Box: 2690 Amman 11181 Jordan.

**TODAY AT**

### PHILADELPHIA

Pierce Brosnan  
as  
James Bond 007  
in  
**GOLDENEYE**  
Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:05, 8:30, 10:30 p.m.

### PLAZA

**Dangerous  
Minds**  
Shows: 3:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30  
**\* The Santa Clause**  
Shows: 12:30, 2, 5:00

### CONCORD

**CONCORD "1"**  
Val Kilmer & Nikol Kidman ..in  
**Batman Forever**  
Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6, 8:15, 10:30  
**CONCORD "2"**  
Jack Nickolson..in..WOLF  
Shows: 6:00, 10:30 p.m.  
Silvester Stallone...in  
**ASSASSINS**  
Shows: 3:30, 8:30 p.m.

### AMMOUN THEATRE & CINEMA/TEL: 618274 - 618275

After the renovation ...  
Presents to its dear  
clients the strongest Arab  
& Foreign films as of  
**1 Jan. 96**

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Shows begin on Dec. 19, 1995 and  
continue on Tuesdays, Wednesdays  
and Thursdays (three days a week)  
only. The programme continues  
until the start of the holy month of  
Ramadan. The Show is entitled:  
**"Ahlan Tatbie"**  
Welcome Normalisation  
For reservation call 625155

هنا عن الفصل



## Yemen threatens to win back island with force

SANAA (AFP) — Yemen warned on Tuesday it could resort to force to win back a disputed Red Sea island captured by Eritrean troops, after more fighting was reported in the strategic Hanish archipelago.

"The fact that Yemen has opted for a peaceful solution does not mean that it will stand idly by," said the government daily Al Sawra, adding that Sanaa "is capable of taking the island by force."

The warning came as diplomats said two Eritrean military boats were repulsed by Yemeni forces stationed on the Isle of Jebel Zogor, 17 kilometres north of the island of Hanish Al Kabir (Greater Hanish), which was captured by Eritrea Dec. 18.

The diplomats also gave no further details, said Yemeni forces prevented the boats from landing on the island early on Tuesday, although Eritrean President Isaias Afewerki insisted there had been no clashes in the past two days.

Earlier, the daily Al Jumhuriya in Sanaa said Yemen had so far avoided force to regain the island because it wanted to prevent "exposing shipping in the major waterway to danger."

The government in Sanaa is facing mounting criticism over its handling of the crisis from many Yemenis who feel that they have been beaten by a country even poorer than they are.

There were even rumours late Monday that the Defence Minister General Abdel Malek Al Sayyami and Chief of Staff General Abdallah Al Ulawah had been sacked, but they were swiftly denied by the official SABA news agency.

The volcanic Hanish Al Kabir fell to Eritrean forces after a three-day battle in which nine soldiers were killed. Asmara and Sanaa are also in dispute over Lesser Hanish and Jebel Zogor.

They all form part of an archipelago of nine islands which guards the strategic straits of Bab Al Mandab at the mouth of the Red Sea, and whose status has never been defined by international conventions.

Eritrea on Tuesday proposed that international observers oversee the withdrawal of its troops and Yemeni soldiers from the island.

Girma Asmeron, in charge of the Eritrean foreign ministry's Africa department, said the deployment of international observers was raised when President Afewerki held talks with Ethiopian Foreign Minister Seyoum Mesfin.

"We're suggesting the names of United States, France, Ethiopia and Egypt to create an international, neutral body that could go there and monitor the withdrawal," Mr. Asmeron said.

Mr. Asmeron added 195 detained Yemeni troops

would be handed over swiftly and unconditionally to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), which dispatched envoy Jean-Francois Sangsue from Addis Ababa to Asmara on Saturday.

"The ICRC can have the prisoners as soon as they're ready to take them. It's only a logistical question, a matter of days," Mr. Asmeron said.

Mr. Mesfin made a second brief visit to Asmara on Tuesday before returning to Ethiopia as part of a shuttle diplomacy which has yet to achieve a tangible result.

Both sides have camped on opposing positions. Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh has called on Eritrea to remove its forces from Hanish Al Kabir before bilateral negotiations on the islands future can begin.

Eritrea has called for both sides to withdraw their troops from the region before taking the issue to arbitration at the International Court of Justice in the Hague.

Egypt has also been trying to resolve the crisis, with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak speaking by telephone Tuesday with his Eritrean counterpart.

Mr. Afewerki assured Mr. Mubarak that "his country stopped all military operations, and there has been no military action for the past two days," Egyptian Information Minister Safwat Al Sherif said.



JORDANIAN-EGYPTIAN TALKS: His Majesty King Hussein and Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak on Tuesday hold private talks in the port city of Aqaba (see story page 1) (photo by Youssef 'Allan)

## Serb leaders demand delay in turning over parts of Sarajevo

PALE, Bosnia-Herzegovina (AP) — Bosnian Serb leaders demanded up to a year's delay in turning over parts of Sarajevo they control to the Bosnian government during a meeting Tuesday with the NATO commander.

Momcilo Krajisnik, a top aide to Serb leader Radovan Karadzic, suggested after the meeting that NATO insist on beginning reunification of the city Jan. 19 could threaten the peace agreement.

"We certainly tried to explain that the key to the implementation of the agreement lies in Sarajevo," Mr. Krajisnik told reporters. "We should find a good solution for Sarajevo and remove the main obstacle of the agreement."

He did not specify how Bosnian Serbs would respond if NATO insists on its current schedule.

The demand came from Mr. Krajisnik since Adm. Leighton Smith shunned Karadzic and Gen. Ratko Mladic, the Bosnian Serb military commander, during talks with Serb officials because both are accused war criminals.

"Our policy is that we do not deal with indicted war criminals. If we encounter them, we will do our best to detain them," said NATO spokesman, Capt. Mark Van Dyke.

In northeastern Bosnia, meanwhile, the first U.S. combat unit crossed into Bosnia from Croatia over the Sava River where it forms the border.

A unit of the 1st Cavalry Regiment, including eight Bradley fighting vehicles and a number of Humvees — jeeps — crossed by barge to secure the river bank where U.S. army engineers are to build a pontoon bridge. They then moved south to set up a checkpoint on a former frontline.

In Sarajevo, Bosnian government troops and their Serb foes pulled back from front lines as NATO soldiers positioned themselves between the factions. Between 300 and 400 French soldiers were moving between the factions in areas being demilitarised around Sarajevo.

Local armies have been given until midnight Wednesday (2300 GMT) — a week since NATO formally took over from a U.N. peacekeeping force — to complete preliminary withdrawals.

Capt. Van Dyke said the hostile armies already had left most of the 38 zones to be vacated by Wednesday. "Everything is going very smoothly," he said.

Adm. Smith, who heads the NATO-led mission to enforce the Dayton peace plan, met with Mr. Krajisnik and Aleksa Buta, self-styled foreign minister of the Bosnian Serbs in Pale, 15 kilometres southeast of Sarajevo.

His trip to Pale had two purposes: To establish personal contact with Serb political leaders and promote freedom of movement over former frontlines, as called for in the peace agreement.

signed Dec. 14 in Paris.

Under that pact, Sarajevo is to revert to being a unified city under jurisdiction of the Muslim and Croat federation that is to share Bosnia with the Serbs. The reunification process is to begin Jan 19, but Adm. Smith said the Serbs asked for a delay of between three months and nearly a year.

"I didn't say 'yes' or 'no,'" Adm. Smith said, adding that he told the Serbs he would consider the request and "take into account all aspects." He said he was empowered as commander of the NATO-led mission to consider an extension.

People in Serb-held sections of Sarajevo are vehemently opposed to living under the rule of their wartime enemies. A referendum earlier this month overwhelmingly rejected a Muslim and Croat-governed Sarajevo. Hundreds already have left Serb-held suburbs — some even taking coffins containing the remains of loved ones.

Though all other parties to the peace agreement reject Bosnian Serb requests that its provisions on Sarajevo be renegotiated, Mr. Krajisnik seemed to be holding on to that option Tuesday.

"Sarajevo Serbs will never accept Muslim authority in its present form because there is fear — the legacy of a bloody civil war and too many people killed and maimed on both sides," he said.

Mr. Krajisnik shielded Adm. Smith from the pour-

ing rain under umbrellas as the two made their way out of the meeting. They sat next to each other at their joint news conference, the Bosnian Serb flag draped behind them.

Bosnian Serbs were evasive and appeared uncomfortable when asked about where Mr. Karadzic is, and about his future role. Sources said, though, that Mr. Karadzic apparently was somewhere in Pale.

Both Mr. Karadzic and Gen. Mladic have been indicted on charges of genocide by a U.N. war crimes tribunal and are subject to arrest on sight by members of the NATO-led implementation force — IFOR — assigned to keep the peace in Bosnia.

In all, 60,000 NATO-led troops — the United States, Britain and France have taken positions in Bosnia to enforce a U.S.-brokered peace accord that seeks to end Europe's deadliest war since World War II.

An aide to Adm. Smith, Rear Adm. John Nathan, speaking in Zagreb, Croatia, said U.S. army engineers are to start building a pontoon bridge at Zupanja, Croatia, across the Sava River into Bosnia around Dec. 30. The bridge will be used to transport most of the equipment of the 20,000-strong U.S. force into the northeastern sector of Bosnia that they will patrol.

Seabees — U.S. navy engineers — have arrived at the site to build a tent city to shelter nearly 7,000 troops, he said.

## Authorities seize 'dangerous' chemicals headed for Iraq

AMMAN (AFP) — Customs officials said Tuesday they had seized several kilograms of "extremely dangerous" imported chemical products heading for Iraq.

The seizure took place recently after the products, which could be used to make chemical weapons, had been waiting in Jordan for several months to pass through strict border controls, and be delivered to Iraq, they said.

The authorities also seized last month machine tools that could be used in the manufacture of missiles, that were also destined for Iraq.

The bulk of the goods destined for Iraq have to pass through Jordan, the only outlet Baghdad has with the outside world because of a U.N. oil and trade embargo imposed on Baghdad after it invaded Kuwait in August 1990.

Under U.N. resolutions, Iraq has to satisfy U.N. arms inspectors that it has destroyed all its weapons of mass

destruction to win a lifting of the oil sanctions.

It is not allowed to have any chemical weapons or missiles with a range of more than 150 kilometres.

The latest haul came after Jordan seized in late November gyroscopes which could be used as guidance systems for long range missiles.

The chemicals were discovered after Iraq handed over documents to the U.N. special commission in charge of Iraqi disarmament (UNSCOM) following the defection of former industry minister General Hussein Kamal Hassan to Jordan in August.

The documents revealed Iraq's links with foreign companies supplying it with armaments contravening the embargo.

Since then, Jordan has decided to clamp down on several Jordanian firms suspected of acting as smokescreens for Iraqi business dealings.

One of the firms, belong-

ing to a Palestinian businessman from Gaza was implicated in importing the Russian gyroscopes from Moscow, officials said. Iraq denied having imported the equipment and Moscow denied it was Russian made.

However, Rolf Ekeus, the UNSCOM chairman, announced on Thursday that his inspectors had found gyroscopes in the Tigris River last week. Mr. Ekeus said they were of the same type as those seized in Jordan.

Meanwhile, foreign minister Adnan Karim Kabariti told the Qatari daily Al Raya on Tuesday that Jordan had "no intention of closing the border with Iraq" despite the seizures of military equipment.

A Jordanian delegation arrived in Iraq on Monday to negotiate a deal for extra Iraqi oil to meet the country's 1996 needs. Iraq is the only supplier of oil to Jordan, providing about 70,000 barrels per day under a special U.N. exemption.

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Jan. 1 declared public holiday

AMMAN (Petra) — All ministries, government departments and public institutions will observe a holiday on Monday, Jan. 1 to mark the beginning of the new year, according to a communique issued by Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker.

### Al Allaf joins Arab League

DAMASCUS (R) — Syria's chief negotiator with Israel, Mowafak Al Allaf, has left the peace team to become assistant secretary-general of the Cairo-based Arab League, officials said on Tuesday. Walid Al Mualem, Syria's ambassador to the United States and Michael Wahbi, director of the Syrian foreign minister's office, will take part in the new round of Syrian-Israeli talks opening near Washington on Wednesday. Officials said Mr. Allaf would take over the international political affairs department from Adnan Omran, also a Syrian, whose assignment ends this month.

### Kazakhstan president begins Israel visit

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AFP) — Kazakhstan's President Nursultan Nazarbayev met with his Israeli counterpart Ezer Weizman on Tuesday at the start of the first official visit to Israel by a leader of the Muslim-led former Soviet republic. Mr. Nazarbayev arrived for the three-day visit at the head of a 110-member delegation which included his foreign and defence ministers, three other cabinet members and a large number of economic officials and businessmen. He and his wife were officially greeted in Jerusalem by Mr. Weizman and then paid their respects at the tomb of slain Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin. Mr. Nazarbayev is scheduled to hold talks Wednesday with Prime Minister Shimon Peres, who visited Kazakhstan as foreign minister in August, and with Israeli business leaders. Mr. Peres and the Kazakh leader are due to sign agreements concerning investment ties and cooperation in the fields of agriculture, health and environment, the Israeli foreign ministry said.

### Shamir will not run for parliament

TEL AVIV (AP) — Former Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, a staunch opponent of land-for-peace agreements with the Arabs, announced Tuesday that he would not run for parliament in the 1996 general elections. Mr. Shamir, 80, lost the 1992 election to the late Yitzhak Rabin and a year later was replaced by Benjamin Netanyahu as leader of the right-wing Likud Party. Mr. Shamir continued to serve as a Likud legislator. On Tuesday, Mr. Shamir told Israeli army radio that he did not plan to compete in the Likud primaries. "I am finished, I will not run for parliament any more," Mr. Shamir said.

## Ben Alawi due tomorrow

By Tareq Ayyoub

Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Omani State Minister for Foreign Affairs Yousef Ben Alawi Abdullah is due here on Thursday in a two-day "private visit" where he is expected to meet with Foreign Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti, the Omani ambassador to Jordan, Mohammad Ben Sultan, said Tuesday.

Mr. Ben Alawi, who will arrive from Damascus, is expected to hold talks with Jordanian officials on bilateral relations as well as the peace and regional developments. Mr. Ben Sultan said.

The chief of the Omani diplomacy, who is in a regional tour that took him to Cairo and Damascus, held talks with Egyptian President

Hosni Mubarak and Foreign Minister Amr Musa.

Oman, a member of the six-nation Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), is spearheading a normalisation process with Israel aimed at ending 47 years of economic boycott of the Jewish state.

The two countries are expected to open commercial offices in Muscat and Tel Aviv to initiate trade relations between the two countries. On Monday, Mr. Alawi who is scheduled to leave Jordan on Friday, announced in the Egyptian capital that he expected that Israel and Oman would conclude a deal on opening the commercial offices in January.

Last year, the late Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin visited the Omani capital and met with Sultan

Qaboos.

On Nov. 6, Mr. Ben Alawi made a visit to Israel, the first by a Gulf country minister, to take part in the funeral of Mr. Rabin who was assassinated by a Jewish extremist.

Among the issues that Mr. Ben Alawi is expected to raise with Mr. Kabariti is the outcome of a visit the latter made to Qatar on Dec. 16. During his visit Mr. Kabariti held talks with the Qatar's emir, Sheikh Hamad Ben Khalifa Al Thani, and Foreign Minister Hamad Ben Jasim.

Qatar boycotted the final session of the GCC, which has held in the Omani capital early this month, to protest GCC decision to elect Saudi Arabia's candidate as the council's new secretary general.

## Aloni urges release of Vanunu

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AFP) — An Israeli minister on Tuesday for the first time urged the release of nuclear technician Mordechai Vanunu, jailed in 1988 for providing secrets on Israel's atomic weapons programme to a British newspaper.

Shulamit Aloni, minister of communications and science, urged that "Vanunu be released, or that at least the conditions of his detention be drastically improved."

The statement on Israeli radio marked the first time that a senior government official has called for Mr. Vanunu's release since he was sentenced in 1988 to 18 years in jail for "espionage and high treason."

"He has already paid enough," she said. "His im-

prisonment is no longer necessary since the information he provided has for a long time been an open secret," said Ms. Aloni, the leader of the left-wing Meretz Party.

She also highlighted that Prime Minister Shimon Peres proposed on Friday that Israel "renounce its nuclear option" after an overall Middle East peace is established, implying that the Jewish state had an atomic arsenal.

"It is intolerable that a democratic country like Israel kidnapped Vanunu to try him, irrespective of the harm he had caused," she said.

Israel's supreme court on Sunday rejected an appeal from Mr. Vanunu against his kidnapping by Israel's external security services, Mossad.

The court also rejected his appeal that Mr. Peres be banned from carrying out his functions. Mr. Vanunu accused Mr. Peres of giving the order to capture him in Italy in September 1986 after he revealed details of Israel's nuclear arsenal to the British weekly The Sunday Times.

Mr. Vanunu, who worked at the top secret Dimona nuclear centre in southern Israel, has been kept in solitary confinement since his kidnapping. He is now aged 40.

According to foreign experts, Israel has about 200 nuclear bombs, as well as long-range nuclear missiles capable of delivering atomic warheads. The Israeli government has never acknowledged having a nuclear weapons programme.

## Court rejects case against Mahfouz

CAIRO (AP) — A criminal court threw out a case filed by an Islamic lawyer who alleged Nobel laureate Naguib Mahfouz and two newspaper editors had ridiculed God and Islam, newspapers reported Tuesday.

Judge Mustafa Abu Taleb of the Criminal Court of Mansura in the Nile Delta issued the ruling Monday on grounds that lawyer Mohammad Abdul Rahman had no legal standing in the case.

The ruling was seen as a victory for secular intellectuals, who have increasingly faced law suits filed by Islamic lawyers. The lawyers use the courts to attack various books.

Mr. Abdul Rahman filed the case last January against

Mr. Mahfouz and the editor and deputy editor of the state-owned daily Al Akhbar. The suit's focus was a comment by Mr. Mahfouz, quoted in the newspaper, that his survival of a 1994 assassination attempt was proof that "Gabalawi" was not angry with him.

Mahfouz was referring to his 1959 novel "Children of Gebelawi," which portrays God as the main character, Gebelawi, and prophets such as Mohammad and Jesus as his children.

The book was banned in Egypt, and in 1989 the militant Islamic cleric Sheikh Omar Abdul Rahman declared that Mr. Mahfouz should be killed because the novel was blasphemous.

Mr. Abdul Rahman filed the case last January against

## Attempt to hijack Saudi airliner foiled

DUBAI (R) — An Ethiopian passenger tried to storm the cockpit of a Saudi Arabian airliner on a flight from Asmara to Addis Ababa Tuesday but was overpowered by the crew, the official Saudi Press Agency (SPA) said.

One of the crew members was injured as they overpowered the man who rushed towards the cockpit, armed with a paper knife and a broken glass bottle, SPA said, quoting an official of the state-owned Saudi Airlines.

The report did not make clear if the passenger had tried to hijack the plane and the official made no mention

of the motive of the passenger, identified as Nabil Mohammad Amin.

The incident took place about 7.47 a.m. (0447 GMT), 10 minutes after the plane took off from Eritrean capital Asmara to Addis Ababa, capital of neighbouring Ethiopia.

The plane, carrying 185 passengers, returned to Asmara airport the attacker was handed over to security authorities.

The plane, whose type was not specified, later continued its journey to Addis Ababa and returned to Jeddah, SPA said.

## COLUMN

### Australian revellers clash with police at Bondi

SYDNEY (R) — Australian police in riot gear clashed with hundreds of Christmas revellers early Tuesday as rioting crowds attacked a bus and cars at Sydney's famous Bondi Beach, police said. Two policemen were slightly hurt as officers were struck by bottles, stones and other objects thrown by revellers, many of them drunk, a spokesman said. There were no arrests but the thousands of dollars worth of damage and tonnes of rubbish left on the beach prompted official threats to ban the traditional Christmas Day party. This year's festivities at the tourist spot attracted more than 20,000 people, many of them foreigners. The daytime party had passed off peacefully, in contrast to previous years. But scores of riot police were called late Monday after brawling broke out and crowds attacked a bus, police and private cars. The bus passengers were lucky to escape unhurt when the revellers tried to overturn the vehicle. The driver escaped by steering his bus through the crowds, the spokesman said. He said Bondi had attracted thousands of overseas tourists but they had not sparked the trouble. He blamed the fighting on "troublemakers" from the city's heavily populated western suburbs who he said were looking for an excuse for violence.

### AIDS patient in good shape after baboon cell transplant

WASHINGTON (AFP) — An AIDS patient who underwent a risky experimental baboon cell transplant last week had some gastrointestinal problems but was spending Christmas with friends, a hospital spokeswoman said. "Jeff Getty is doing well. He's had a few gastrointestinal problems but he seems to be doing a little bit better. He's visiting with friends today," Alice Trinkel, spokeswoman for the San Francisco General Hospital, said in a recorded message from San Francisco, California. The 38-year-old, who was diagnosed with AIDS nine years ago, underwent the first baboon-to-human transplant of bone marrow cells on Dec. 14 at the hospital. Doctors hope the animal's natural resistance to the AIDS virus will boost Mr. Getty's immune system to halt progress of the fatal disease.

### Bullying cases at Japanese schools surge

TOKYO (AFP) — The number of bullying cases reported at Japanese public schools surged to 56,601 in the year to March this year, 2.6 times more than the previous year, the Education Ministry said Friday. According to a nationwide survey, 166 students committed suicide, up 35 cases from the previous year. Bullying was blamed for five of the suicides, including last November's case of a 13-year-old school boy which made headlines and prompted national concern. The boy left a suicide note saying he was forced by bullies to pay more than one million yen (\$9,850) and that he could no longer stand it. The surge in reported bullying cases resulted from increased efforts on the part of schools to find them, a ministry official said. The ministry issued a notice to them to conduct thorough inspection following last November's case.